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The Life and Letters of TOBIAS SMOLLETT

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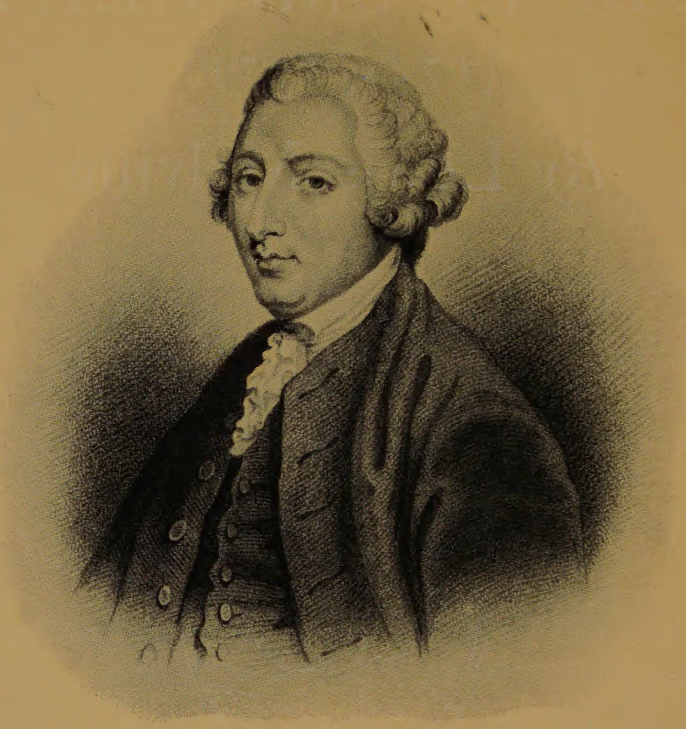
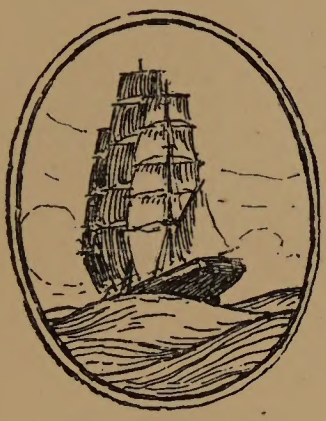


TOBIAS SMOLLETT

From an Engraving by Freeman

The Life and Letters of
TOBIAS SMOLLETT
(1721-1771)

By Lewis Melville



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TO

VERNON R. M. GATTIE

C.B.E.

21518

PREFACE

FEW men of letters lead an adventurous life, and Smollett was no exception to the rule. Yet, in the course of his fifty years, he touched life at many angles. Of gentle birth, he was educated at a Scotch Grammar School and at Glasgow University; he served in an apothecary's shop; he went as a naval surgeon with the fleet that fought the disastrous action against Carthagena; he set up in London and Bath as a surgeon; he was poet, novelist, pamphleteer, reviewer, historian, political journalist, editor of periodicals and newspapers, and of many respectable compilations of various kinds; he travelled in France and Italy; and, for some years, was a leader of literary society.

A sturdy controversialist in his public character in the literary and political circles, in private he was a quiet, homely, domesticated creature. The amorous adventures of his heroes found no counterpart in his own life: he was a devoted husband and a loving father. Always at issue with fortune, he contrived by honest toil to keep his head just above water, and though much of the work he undertook was uncongenial, he contrived never to become a bookseller's hack or inmate of Grub Street.

There is a tendency to read autobiography into passages in the works of novelists. The practice, which is always dangerous, may well be fatal in the

case of Smollett, for though he might take an incident in his career, he would use it only as a basis and distort it as he pleased for the purposes of his story. In 'Humphry Clinker', however, there is unquestionably biographical information of value.

Biographers of Smollett suffer from the fact that little of his correspondence has been preserved. No letters written in his early years have been traced—the first that is known bears the date 1750, when he was in his thirtieth year. It is surprising that in the long series of volumes of the Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission there is not a single letter written by or to him, nor any reference to him of the slightest importance.

The first biographical account of Smollett was by Robert Anderson in 1796, and in the following year appeared a memoir by Dr. John Moore, a close personal friend of the novelist. Since, there have been brief biographies by Alexander Chalmers (1810), Sir Walter Scott (1821), S. W. Singer (1822), Thomas Roscoe (1841), Dr. Robert Chambers (1867), David Herbert (1867), David Hannay ('Great Writers', 1887), and Oliphant Smeaton ('Famous Scots', 1897). The articles in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' and the 'Dictionary of National Biography' are by Thomas Seccombe. Very valuable is the account of the Smollett family in Irving's 'Book of Dumbartonshire' (1879).

Information about Smollett is contained in a very considerable number of works, and, among others, the following have been consulted: Wright's 'Caricature History of the Georges', Wheatley and Cunningham's 'London, Past and Present', Charles Churchill's 'Poems', Wadd's 'Nugae Chirurgicae', Hutton's 'Literary Landmarks of London', Faulkner's 'History of Chelsea', Warburton's 'Horace

Walpole and His Contemporaries', Sterne's 'Sentimental Journey', Nichols' 'Literary Anecdotes' and 'Literary Illustrations', Isaac Disraeli's 'Calamities of Literature', Genest's 'Account of the English Stage', Baker's 'Biographia Dramatica', Hillard's 'Six Months in Italy', Barbeau's 'Bath', Walpole's 'History of the Reign of George III.', Pera's 'Curiosità Livornesi', Andrew Henderson's 'A Second Letter to Dr. Johnson', Launcelot Temple [*i.e.* John Armstrong]'s 'Short Ramble through Italy', Doran's 'Man and Manners at the Court of Florence', Joseph Reed's 'A Sop in the Pan', Grainger's 'Letter to Tobias Smollett, M.D.', John Shebbeare's 'Occasional Critic'; the Catalogue of the Collection of Autograph Letters formed by the late Alfred Morrison; the *Covent Garden Journal*; the biographies of Johnson (Boswell, ed. Hill), Goldsmith (Forster), Garrick (Davies), Lord Kames (Woodhouselee), David Hume (Burton), William Smellie (Glaister), and Fielding (Lawrence and Wilbur Cross); the autobiographies of Alexander Carlyle and Mrs. Delany; and the correspondence of Johnson (ed. Hill), Garrick, Wilkes, Hume, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Horace Walpole, and Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. There are interesting articles on Smollett in the *European Magazine* (1804), *Portfolio* (Philadelphia, November 1811), *Quarterly Review* (James Hannay, January 1858), *Atlantic Monthly* (June 1859), *Gentleman's Magazine*, and *Notes and Queries*. In the British Museum there are some hitherto unpublished letters by Smollett, and his annotated copy of his 'Travels in France and Italy'.

Besides the critical estimates of the works of Smollett in the various biographies, there are important appreciations by Thomas Campbell, Hazlitt, Henry Cary, Thackeray, David Masson, and Taine. W. E.

Henley and George Saintsbury have written Introductions to editions of Smollett's collected works. The latest edition, published by Messrs. Basil Blackwell, of Oxford, in 1925, contains illuminating bibliographical notes, which every student must consult.

Since this book was written there has been published by the Yale University Press an interesting study in Smollett, chiefly 'Peregrine Pickle,' with a complete collation of the first and second editions, by Dr. Howard Swazey Buck.

Smollett's Prefaces are of very considerable value as documents, and, since they are not always included in reprints, these are reprinted in the Appendix to this work. In the Appendix will also be found a 'key' to 'The History and Adventures of an Atom', and a remarkable extract from 'Wonderful Prophecies; being a Dissertation on the Existence, Nature, and Extent of the Prophetic Powers in the Human Mind' (1795).

I have gratefully to acknowledge information that has been given by Mr. J. W. Keogh, H.B.M.'s Consul at Nice; Mr. F. B. Lamb, H.B.M.'s Acting Consul at Leghorn; Mr. Charles Duff, of the Foreign Office; and Mr. Richard Northcott, the Archivist of Covent Garden Theatre and a leading authority on operatic and theatrical history. To Mrs. E. Constance Monfrino I am indebted for assistance rendered in the preparation of this biography.

LEWIS MELVILLE

LONDON, *May* 1926

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Chapter I

THE FAMILY OF SMOLLETT

THE family of Smollett[1] is of very respectable antiquity. The novelist who is the subject of this book, wished to claim for it Norman origin. In a letter dated Chelsea, March 9, 1756, written to one of his relatives, probably his cousin James Smollett of Bonhill, in Dumbartonshire, he displays great interest in the genealogy:

'I begin to think we were originally Malet or Molet and came from Normandy with the Conqueror. He had followers of both names, and they settled in the north. William Malet was governor of York, and a very gallant officer. The S may have shifted its place from the end of the prenomen to the beginning of the surname. There is a Norman who keeps a public house in the skirts of Chelsea, of the name of Jonas Mollet. I have by me an old diploma signed at Caen about an hundred years ago—S Malet antiquior Scholee medicinalis magister. I should be very glad to know if you have any anecdotes of our little family. I have been told they were freeholders in Dumbarton four hundred years ago.

'By-the-bye, I find Dumbarton was once the capital of the kingdom of Arecluyd, inhabited by

[1] The family arms are: Az. a bend or, between a lion rampant, ppr., holding in his paw a banner, arg., and a bugle horn, also ppr. The crest: an old tree. Motto: Viresco.

Britons or Cumbreans, whence its name of Dunbritton; that this kingdom extended westerly to the extremity of Cunningham's, or the Cumera Islands, in the mouth of the Clyde; that it was bounded by the Forth on one side, and the Irish Channel on the other. The greatest part of Dumbarton has been destroyed by an inundation. I myself when a boy have felt the stones of the pavement under water between what is called the College and the Town's End. I think I remember to have seen the ruins of old stone houses on the other side of the Sands, and on your ground at the Stony Flat there are many remains of Druid worshipping places.

'I am persuaded that an antiquarian would find much entertainment about Dumbarton, and even some noble monuments of Roman antiquity, for there was a stationary camp within three miles of the place at Kilpatrick, for the guard of the wall built by Lollius Urbicus, in the reign of Antonius, commonly called Graeme's Dyke, which Buchanan ignorantly confounds with the wall built by Severus from the Esk to the Tyne, in the north of England; and as the Britons of Arecluyd were under the Roman protection, they must have entertained an intimate intercourse, and without doubt the Roman generals and officers of rank lived at Dunbritton. You will think this a strange rhapsody, but to me the subject is interesting. I have had occasion lately to inquire into the antiquities of our country. I find the Scots came from Ireland but yesterday, in comparison with the antiquity of the Caledonians and Britons of Arecluyd. I would fain derive myself from these last.'

The first actual reference to the family has been found in Dumbarton Burgh Records, where the name of John Smollett, a bailie of that town, and a prominent

merchant and shipowner, appears in the first decade of the sixteenth century. His son John, also a bailie of Dumbarton, was one of the Commissioners appointed to negotiate with the burgh of Renfrew regarding disputes as to the navigation of the Clyde. In 1528 he was one of seven to appear before the Regent of England to obtain restoration of gold, silver, hides, woollen cloth, and pickled salmon, belonging to them, captured in the ship 'James' of Dumbarton. John's heir, James, is designated of Over-Kirkton, and he took an active part in local affairs. He was succeeded by his son Tobias, heir of his father and mother to certain tenements in Dumbarton, who was killed in the conflict at Glenfriern in February 1603. The estate passed to his sister Margaret, whose husband, James Bontein of Succoth, thereupon assumed the designation of Kirklow.

The male line of the elder Smolletts of Kirklow being exhausted, there was return to William, second son of the John Smollett mentioned above as a Commissioner in connection with the navigation of the Clyde. Apparently his father left him some portion of the estate of Kirklow, since his son John was known by that title. John, in 1591, was charged before the Privy Council with being concerned in Bothwell's conspiracy for seizing the King in Holywood House. There is a tradition that he was responsible for blowing up one of the vessels belonging to the Spanish Armada, off the island of Mull, in 1588.

It is from the John Smollett who was admitted a burgher of Dumbarton in 1638 that the descent of the novelist is definite. John was a merchant, probably at one time opulent, but his later ventures being unsuccessful, in 1672 he handed over the conduct of his affairs to his son James, who succeeded to the estate eight years later.

James Smollett, the first of Bonhill, who was born in 1648, was in his day a person of considerable importance. Apprenticed in 1665 to Walter Ewing, a Writer to the Signet, at the age of twenty-eight he was appointed Deputy-Clerk of the Regality of Lennox. He was a man of independent spirit. In 1685 he was elected to represent the burgh in the Scottish Parliament. When he was there representing Dumbarton, he strongly resented the instructions sent to him by his constituents to oppose the Union as a measure detrimental to the welfare of Scotland. His protest was expressed in such vigorous terms as to produce a communication to the effect that these instructions 'were never designed to invade the liberty of your own conscience, whether as to the Union or any other matter, nor to bind you up from following your own light according to the oath of Parliament'. In 1715 he was created a Deputy-Lieutenant of Dumbartonshire, which appointment was announced to him in the following terms by John Campbell, second Duke of Argyll, who had been sent to suppress Mar's insurrection:

'His Majestie having been pleased to give me the command of the shyre of Dumbarton, I have appointed you to be one of the Deputy-Lieutenants. I am very sensible of the good affection of your shyre for his Majestie's person and government, and I don't at all doubt but you will exert yourselves upon this occasion, for supporting me in reducing the rebells now in arms against their Protestant King, in favour of a Popish pretender. All the unhappy consequences which necessarily attend a war in the heart of our country, are the fruits of the rebellious practices of our enemies, and to be imputed to them alone. It was with the greater satisfaction that I lately received from the King

the honour of the lieutenancy of your shyre, in that not only my ancestors have formerly been authorised to lead your men, but the peculiar uninterrupted friendship which the gentlemen of your shyre have always had personally for my family, is what I and my posterity will always think our duty to remember and return. And you cannot increase the obligation we owe you more than by showing at this tyme a faithfull resolute zeall for his sacred Majestie, and thereby endeavouring to establish the peace of our native country, now violated by the unnatural rage of the avowed abettor of Poperye and slavery.'

James Smollett was in 1690 appointed Judge in the Commissary Court of Edinburgh. A zealous supporter of the Revolution, he was eight years later knighted by King William for his public services. An advocate of the project of the Union between England and Scotland, he was appointed a Commissioner for framing the Articles, and, when the Union was passed, he was elected the first representative of the Dumbarton district of burghs (Dumbarton, Glasgow, Renfrew, and Rutherglen) in the British Parliament. He married Jane, a daughter of Sir Aulay Macaulay, Bart., of Ardincaple, and by her had four sons and two daughters.

James's eldest son, Tobias, was a captain in Lord Strathmore's regiment, served from 1696 to 1704 as Provost of Dumbarton, and in 1699 received from the Duke of Richmond and Lennox the appointment of Sheriff of Dumbartonshire. He predeceased his father, leaving no male issue. The second son, James, born in 1683, who was made Commissary of Edinburgh in 1702, also died before his father, but left by his wife Helen, third daughter of the Hon. Alexander Ogilvy of Forglen, an only son, also James, who

succeeded to the estates on the death of his grandfather in 1731.

This James Smollett, who was a lieutenant in Captain Paget's regiment, acquired considerable properties, which, he dying without issue in 1738, passed to his cousin George of Inglestone. George added to the family property by the purchase of the estate of Cameron, where he resided in preference to Bonhill House, which was somewhat out of repair. Tobias, the novelist, visited him at Cameron in 1766, and seven years later Dr. Johnson spent a night on his return from his trip in the Hebrides.

Archibald, the fourth son of Sir James Smollett, as a young man spent some time in a business house at Leyden, but catching an ague there, he returned to Bonhill. He married, without his father's consent, Barbara, daughter of Robert Cunningham of Gilbertfield, in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, a young lady of gentle birth, but without an appropriate dowry. The alliance was certainly not welcomed with enthusiasm by his father, but presently, though not without a show of reluctance, he accepted the fact, and lent Archibald the house and lands of Dalquhurn in the Vale of Leven in the parish of Cardross—described by Joseph Irving as a property lying contiguous to his own grounds of Bonhill—which, prior to its purchase by Sir James from Charles Fleming in 1692, had been the residence, first of the Spreull family, and then of a branch of the house of Dennistoun of Colgrain; together with an income, which has been stated to be three hundred a year. While Sir James's disapproval of Archibald's marriage may have suggested to the novelist the opening chapter of 'Roderick Random', it is clear enough that he did not behave in the barbarous manner ascribed to young Random's grandfather.

Of Archibald Smollett's marriage there was issue:

(1) James, who entered the army. 'After he had attained the rank of captain, the regiment to which he belonged was ordered abroad, the transport in which he was with part of the troops was lost off the coast of America,' Dr. John Moore has recorded. 'I have often heard of him as a young man of distinguished spirit, and of an excellent character; the Doctor never mentioned him but in the most affectionate terms';

(2) Jane, who married Alexander Telfer of Symington, and who subsequently inherited the family estates; and

(3) Tobias George, the novelist—who, however, does not appear often to have used his second Christian name.

Old Sir James Smollett in 1721, ten years before his death, set his affairs in order. He settled his estate in entail on James Smollett, the son of his second son, James, with remainder, failing direct male issue, not to his own third son, George, who was in serious monetary troubles, but to George's son James. The two James held the estate in turn, the second succeeding to the first in 1738, and enjoying it until his death in 1775. In the deed executed by Sir James, there is no mention of his fourth son, Archibald, who died about 1723. Archibald's three children were left dependent upon the generosity of Sir James's heirs. In a scheme of Captain James Smollett's yearly income and expenditure there is the item, 'To Arch. Smollett's two younger children until they are twelve years old £22:4:5'. Perhaps this was not so inconsiderable as now it appears, because the provision made for Sir James's widow, his second wife (Elizabeth, daughter of William Hamilton, whom he married in 1709) and the step-grandmother of the novelist, was only just double this amount.

Chapter II

1721–1738

Birth of Tobias Smollett—Death of his father—Sir James Smollett makes provision for the widow—Smollett at Dumbarton Grammar School—John Love—At Glasgow University—Studies medicine—Apprenticed to John Gordon—His ill-health—His love of the countryside—'To Leven-Water'.

The date of the birth of the novelist is not precisely known, but some idea of it can be derived from the following entry in the Parish Register of Cardross: 'March 19, 1721, Tobias George, son of Mr. Arcd. Smollett and Barbara Cunningham, Dalquhurn, was baptised.' His father died when he was two years old, but Sir James allowed the widow to stay on with her three children at Dalquhurn, where they lived perforce thriftily but not in any acute discomfort.

At an early age Smollett was sent to the Grammar School at Dumbarton, where he lived in a lodging in the town, no doubt under proper supervision. The head-master was John Love, a man of considerable attainments. Educated at Dumbarton Grammar School and Glasgow University, Love became usher to his old schoolmaster, and in 1721 was appointed his successor, he then being twenty-six years of age. Here he remained until 1735, when he was appointed a master at the Edinburgh High School, where he

remained for four years, when he was nominated at the instance of the Duke of Buccleugh, Rector of Dalkeith Grammar School, which position he held until his death in 1750. He issued in 1735 from Thomas Ruddiman's printing works in Edinburgh two grammatical treatises that attracted much attention. Subsequently he entered into a controversy with Ruddiman as to the comparative merits of Johnston and George Buchanan as Latin poets and translators of the Psalms, which he conducted with such vigour as to sever his friendship with his opponent. However, when Love died, Ruddiman wrote an appreciation in his paper, the *Caledonian Mercury*: 'For his uncommon knowledge in classical learning, his indefatigable diligence, and stricture of discipline without severity, he was justly accounted one of the most efficient masters in this country.'

Love clearly was an excellent master. It was at Dumbarton Grammar School that Smollett imbibed his knowledge of Latin and of classical learning generally. It was here, too, that he began to write. 'The first sprouts of Smollett's poetical genius appeared while he was at the Grammar School of Dumbarton, as I was informed by an old schoolfellow of his,' states his earliest biographer, Dr. John Moore, who was well acquainted with him. 'These were verses to the memory of Wallace, of whom he became an early admirer, from the popular stories current in that part of the country, and also from the perusal of Blind Harry's translation of the Latin poems of Robert Blair, Chaplain to Sir William Wallace, entitled "Gesta Willelmi Wallas" and "De Liberata Tyrannide Scotia".' A text-book in use at Dumbarton Grammar School was George Buchanan's 'Rerum Scoticarum Historia', and the perusal of the story of the murder of King James I of Scotland at Perth may

well have been the inspiration of Smollett's 'The Regicide'.

Young Smollett, however, was not always so serious. He amused himself by giving rein to his satirical bent in the form of verse, probably to the very considerable annoyance of his fellows, who had no means of retort save brute force. It may be recalled that Roderick Random was treated badly by his schoolfellows and bullied unmercifully, but there is no information as to whether Smollett was happy or unhappy, though he writes with so much feeling in the novel that these passages may well have been inspired by the recollections of his sufferings as a lad.

It is said that Smollett aspired to a military career, but his cousin James Smollett of Bonhill, who had bought a commission for Tobias's elder brother, did not see his way to do so for the other. Instead, therefore, of going into the army, he was, at the age of fifteen, removed from Dumbarton Grammar School, where he had proved that his parts were quick and his capacity for learning good, and sent in 1736 to study at Glasgow University. At the time that Smollett's name was entered on the books, Francis Hutcheson was Professor of Moral Philosophy, and Robert Simson Professor of Mathematics. Among the young medical students were William Cullen, presently famous as an Edinburgh physician, and William Hunter, later eminent as an anatomist.

At first Smollett at Glasgow studied Latin, Greek, and mathematics; but soon after, it having been decided that he should become a doctor, he more particularly attended the classes for surgery and medicine. During his stay at the University, Cousin James of Bonhill, who had some acquaintance with John Gordon, a Glasgow doctor and apothecary, arranged that the lad should be apprenticed to that gentleman, in whose

shop he served, and in whose house it would appear he resided.

Smollett certainly picked up some medical lore, but he did not too exclusively devote himself to his studies. He was rather a wild lad, but with no vice in him. 'Although, at so early a period of life', it has been related of him, 'he was liable to very great mistakes in judging of the characters of mankind, yet he began to direct the edge of his boyish satire against such scanty shoots of affectation and ridicule as were produced in a city enriched by commerce, and enlightened by its university. The shafts of his wit were not even then confined to the coquetry and foppery of the youthful and fashionable only, but were sometimes aimed at the selfishness and hypocrisy of the more formal and serious part of the citizens, among whom the chief means of acquiring importance were the possession of wealth, and the decent observances of the duties of religion. These early productions of his muse afforded much entertainment to his young companions, but they gave offence to many pious and industrious persons, who were unjustly accused of being hypocrites, and exposed to his satire. Some of them, it is said, possessed a considerable portion of that species of humour for which he was afterwards so much distinguished. None of them, however, have been thought worthy of preservation.'

An amusing story of this period has been handed down by Dr. Moore: 'On a winter evening, when the streets were covered with snow, Smollett happened to be engaged in a snowball fight with a few boys of his own age. Among his associates was the apprentice of that surgeon who is supposed to have been delineated under the name of Crab in "Roderick Random". He entered his shop while his apprentice was in the heat of the engagement. On the return of the latter,

the master remonstrated with him severely for his negligence in quitting the shop. The youth excused himself by saying that while he was employed in making up a prescription, a fellow hit him with a snowball in the teeth, and that he had been in pursuit of the delinquent. " A mighty probable story, truly," said the master in an ironical tone. " I wonder how long I could stand here ", added he, " before it would enter any mortal man's head to throw a snowball at *me*." While he was holding his head erect, with a most scornful air, he received a very severe blow in the face by a snowball. Smollett, who stood concealed behind the pillar at the shop-door, had heard the dialogue, and perceiving that his companion was puzzled for an answer, he extricated him by a repartee equally smart and à propos.'

Anyhow, Smollett endeared himself to John Gordon, who, by the way, rose to be a prominent consulting surgeon. ' It is said ', Sir Walter Scott tells the story, ' that his master expressed his conviction of Smollett's future eminence in very homely but expressive terms, when some of his neighbours were boasting of the superior decorum and propriety of their young pupils. " It may be all very true," said the keen-sighted Mr. Gordon, " but give me, before them all, my ain bubbly-nosed callant, with the stane in his pouch." ' Clearly it would not be fair to leave it at that, so Scott explains, for the benefit of Southern readers, that the words contain a faithful sketch of a negligent, unlucky, but spirited creature, never without some mischievous prank in his head, and a stone in his pocket to execute it.

Likewise, Smollett became devoted to Gordon, and paid him tribute some thirty years later in ' Humphry Clinker '. ' I was introduced ', he writes in the person of Matthew Bramble, ' to Mr. Gordon, a

patriot of a truly noble spirit, who is father of the linen industry in that place, and was the promoter of the city workhouse, infirmary, and other works of public utility. Had he lived in ancient Rome, he would have been honoured with a statue at the public expense.'

Smollett remained at Glasgow until 1739, but his health was not good. 'There is no matter of Tobias staying,' Gordon wrote to James Smollett of Bonhill on September 15, 1738, 'for as he is sometimes troubled with a cough, I was satisfied that he got a week or two in the country. I hope he will do very well.' It was accordingly decided that he should go south.

In Smollett's books there are numerous Scotch folk, and though he wrote in 'Roderick Random': 'I did not at all wonder to see a cheat in canonicals, that being a character frequent in my own country,' as a rule he depicted his fellow-countryman with kindness. He certainly had an affection for his native land, and celebrated it in both poetry and prose.

TO LEVEN-WATER

On Leven's bank, while free to rove,
And tune the rural pipe to love;
I envied not the happiest swain
That ever trod the Arcadian plain.
Pure stream! in whose transparent wave
My youthful limbs I wont to lave;
No torrents stain thy limpid source—
No rocks impede thy dimpling course,
That sweetly warbles o'er its bed,
With white round polish'd pebbles spread,
While, lightly pois'd, the scaly brood
In myriads cleave thy crystal flood,
The speckled trout in speckled pride,
The salmon, monarch of the tide,
The ruthless pike, intent on war,
The silver eel, and mottled par.

Devolving from thy parent lake,
A charming maze thy waters make,
By bowers of birch, and groves of pine,
And edges flowered with eglantine.
Still on thy banks so gaily green
May num'rous herds and flocks be seen
And lasses chanting o'er the pail,
And shepherds piping in the dale,
And ancient Faith that knows no guile,
And Industry imbrown'd with toil,
And hearts resolv'd, and hands prepar'd,
The blessings they enjoy to guard.

Towards the end of his life he wrote, in 'Humphry Clinker', of the family estate, which, had he lived longer, he would have inherited:

'A very little above the source of the Leven, on the lake, stands the house of Cameron, belonging to Mr. Smollett, so embosomed in an oak wood, that we did not see it till we were within fifty yards of the door. The lake approaches on one side to within six or seven yards of the window. It might have been placed in a higher situation, which would have afforded a more extensive prospect, and a drier atmosphere; but this imperfection is not chargeable on the present proprietor, who purchased it ready built, rather than be at the trouble of repairing his own family house of Bonhill, which stands two miles from hence on the Leven, so surrounded with plantations, that it used to be known by the name of the Mavis (or thrush) Nest. Above that house is a romantic glen, or cleft of a mountain, covered with hanging woods, having at bottom a stream of fine water, that forms a number of cascades in its descent to join the Leven, so that the scene is quite enchanting.

'I have seen the Lago di Garda, Albano di Vico, Bolsena, and Geneva, and I prefer Loch Lomond to

them all; a preference which is certainly owing to the verdant islands that seem to float upon its surface, affording the most enchanting objects of repose to the excursive view. Nor are the banks destitute of beauties which even partake of the sublime. On this side they display a sweet variety of woodland, corn-fields, and pasture, with several agreeable villas, emerging, as it were, out of the lake, till at some distance, the prospect terminates in huge mountains, covered with heath, which being in the bloom, affords a very rich covering of purple. Everything here is romantic beyond imagination. This country is justly styled the Arcadia of Scotland: I do not doubt but it may vie with Arcadia in everything but climate. I am sure it excels it in verdure, wood, and water.'

Chapter III

1739–1745

Death of Sir James Smollett—Tobias Smollett comes to London —The journey—He takes with him his play 'The Regicide' —Appointed surgeon on H.M.S. 'Cumberland'—With the expedition to Carthagena—His opinion of that operation —At Jamaica falls in love with Anne Lascelles—Returns to London—Sets up as a surgeon—Tries to get 'The Regicide' produced—Charles Fleetwood—Willoughby Lacy—John Rich—Lord Chesterfield—David Garrick—George Lyttelton—Smollett lampoons the managers and his 'patrons' —His life in London—'The Tears of Scotland'.

The death of Sir James Smollett in 1731 had very considerably affected the financial position of his daughter-in-law, the novelist's mother, for the allowance he had made her was not, as has been said, continued after his death, and she could no longer afford to live at Dalquhurn. She moved to Edinburgh, where she rented a 'floor' or 'flat' in St. John Street. There, it would appear, she remained until 1738, when Sir James's heir, his grandson James, who had given her some assistance, died. George Smollett of Inglestone succeeded, but was not prepared to assist her. Fortunately, her daughter, Jane, had married a pleasant, generous man, Alexander Telfer, lessee of the lead mines at Wanlockhead, who offered her a home.

It was now clear enough that young Smollett would have to fend for himself. It may well be that

he, like Roderick Random, was ill-equipped enough when he set out for London. Random has said: 'My whole fortune consisting of one suit of clothes, half-a-dozen of ruffled shirts, as many plain, two pairs of worsted, and a like number of thread stockings, a case of pocket instruments, a small edition of Horace, Wiseman's Surgery, and ten guineas in cash.' In fact, the traditional half-crown of the adventurer. Of Smollett Dr. Moore relates that he had little money and many introductions: 'Whether they, the family,' he adds, 'designed to make up for the scantiness of the one by their profusion of the other is uncertain; but he has often been heard to declare that their liberality in the last article was prodigious.'

So Smollett set out southward-bound, and it is to be hoped that his journey was less exciting and more comfortable than that of Roderick Random. 'There is no such convenience as a waggon in this country, and my finances were too weak to support the expense of hiring a horse,' Random relates; 'I determined therefore to set out with the carriers, who transport goods from one place to another on horseback; and this I accordingly put in execution on the first day of November 1739, sitting upon a pack-saddle between two baskets; one of which contained my goods in a knap-sack. By the time we arrived at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, I was so fatigued with the tediousness of the carriage, and benumbed with the coldness of the weather, that I resolved to travel the rest of my journey on foot.' After having walked many days he hears one evening at a small town 'that the waggon from Newcastle for London had halted there two nights ago, and it would be an easy matter to overtake it, if not the next day, at farthest the day after the next'.

Smollett arrived in London, bringing with him what he regarded as his great asset, the manuscript

of his tragedy, 'The Regicide', upon which he based his hopes of fame and fortune; and, what he regarded as less important, but which proved at the moment to be more valuable, a letter of introduction from James Smollett of Bonhill to Andrew Mitchell. Mitchell was then Under-Secretary for Scotland—subsequently he received promotion, received the honour of knighthood, and was appointed in 1756 British Envoy to Frederick the Great. As he and James Smollett were cousins, their mothers being daughters of Sir Hugh Cunningham of Bonnington, it was thought possible that he, at the request of 'Dear Cousin', might be likely to use his influence to secure a post for his youthful connection.

It is not unlikely that there is at least an autobiographical touch in the description of the way in which Roderick Random had to live when he was first in London:

'He readily gave us a line to one of his acquaintances, who kept a chandler's shop, not far from St. Martin's Lane; there we hired a bedroom, up two pair of stairs, at the rate of two shillings per week, so very small that, when the bed was let down, we were obliged to carry out every other piece of furniture that belonged to the apartment, and use the bedstead by way of chairs. About dinner-time, our landlord asked us how we proposed to live? to which interrogation we answered, that we should be directed by him. "Well then," says he, "there are two ways of eating in this town, for people of your condition—the one more creditable and expensive than the other; the first is to dine at an eating-house, frequented by well-dressed people only; and the other is called diving, practised by those who are either obliged or inclined to live frugally." I gave him to understand that,

provided the last was not infamous, it would suit much better with our circumstances than the other. "Infamous," cried he, "God forbid! there are many creditable people, rich people, ay, and fine people, who dive every day. I have seen many a pretty gentleman, with a laced waistcoat, dine in that manner very comfortably for threepence-halfpenny, and go afterwards to the coffee-house, where he made a figure with the best lord in the land; but your own eyes shall bear witness—I will go along with you today and introduce you." He accordingly conducted us to a certain lane, where stopping, he bade us observe him, and do as he did, and, walking a few paces, dived into a cellar, and disappeared in an instant. I followed his example, and descending very successfully, found myself in the middle of a cook's shop, almost suffocated with the steam of boiled beef, and surrounded by a company of hackney coachmen, chairmen, draymen, and a few footmen out of place or on board wages, who sat eating shin of beef, tripe, cowheel, or sausages, at separate boards, with cloths which turned my stomach.'

Smollett, who had been seeking a market for 'The Regicide', was at last convinced that there was no demand for his tragedy, and, his small store of money being nearly exhausted, he applied to Mitchell, who did, indeed, exert himself for his kinsman, whose only qualification was an elementary knowledge of medicine. How far the experiences of Smollett at the Navy Office and at Surgeons' Hall tallied with those of Roderick Random will never be known; but there was probably some resemblance, though no doubt the incidents as related in the novel are exaggerated. Anyhow, Smollett passed the examiners of the Incorporation of Barbers and Surgeons.

Smollett came to town at the right moment for himself, since in 1739 war was declared against Spain, and as more ships were put into commission, there were vacancies in the navy for surgeons. He presently secured an appointment as surgeon's mate on board the 'Cumberland', Captain Stuart, 80 guns, one of the largest of the vessels which sailed from St. Helens on October 26, 1740, under the command of Sir Chaloner Ogle, to reinforce the fleet of Admiral Edward Vernon in the West Indies.

If the navy of those days was anything like the navy as depicted in 'Roderick Random', life on board must have been a very hell on earth. Certainly Smollett cannot say anything too bad for it—the awful quarters, the horrible food, the brutality of the officers, and the incompetence of the surgeons. If the portraits of Morgan, the first mate, Captain Oakum, Captain Whiffle, and the others in the novel were drawn from life, it is not surprising that the personnel of the navy had to be recruited by the press-gang: certainly no man, however dire his circumstances, would voluntarily have undergone a second voyage.

Smollett was present at the unsuccessful attack on Carthagena in 1741, and put on record his experiences, first, in 'Roderick Random' seven years later, and again in 1756 gave an account of the operations in a compilation which he edited, 'A Compendium of Authentic and Interesting Voyages'. In the novel he wrote with unquestionable exaggeration, but even when writing in the 'Voyages' with due sobriety, the case against the leaders of the expedition is very black:

'It is a melancholy truth, which, however, ought to be told, that a low, ridiculous, and pernicious jealousy subsisted between the land and sea-officers during this whole expedition; and that the chiefs were so weak

or wicked as to take all opportunities of thwarting and manifesting their contempt for each other, at a time when the lives of as many brave fellow-subjects were at stake, and when the interest and honour of their country required the utmost zeal and unanimity. Instead of conferring personally, and co-operating with vigour and cordiality, they began to hold separate councils, draw up acrimonious remonstrances, and send irritating messages to each other; and while each of them piqued himself upon doing barely as much as would screen him from the censure of a court-martial, neither seemed displeased at the neglect of his colleague; but, on the contrary, both were in appearance glad of the miscarriage of the expedition, in hope of seeing one another stigmatized with infamy and disgrace. In a word, the Admiral was a man of weak understanding, strong prejudices, boundless arrogance, and over-boiling passions; and the general though he had some parts, was wholly defective in point of experience, confidence and resolution. . . .

'On Friday the 27th, the "Griffin" and "Oxford" were ordered to advance, and post themselves across the mouth of the inner harbour called Surgideto; while the "Weymouth" and "Cruizer" sloop were detached to the other side of the harbour, to demolish two small batteries on each side of the Passo-Cavallos, or Horse-Ferry, a creek through which provisions were conveyed into the Laguna, and from thence to the city. This piece of service was performed with opposition, under the direction of Captain Knowles, who at the same time took some hulks, and small craft that were serviceable in watering the fleet, at a very convenient wharf which they found by the side of an excellent spring.

'This was a very welcome discovery to the people on board of the fleet, who had been hitherto restricted

to a very scanty allowance of this element, namely, a purser's quart (about three half pints) per diem to every individual: in a climate where there is such a continual expense of the animal fluid, that so many gallons might have been necessary to repair the waste of four and twenty hours, in a hard working man, sweating under the sun, which was vertical, and fed with putrid beef, rusty pork, and bread swarming with maggots. Nor could this restriction be owing to the fears of scarcity; for over and above all the water-casks which were filled at Hispaniola, there was not an old empty pipe, puncheon, pork-tub, or beef barrel that was not converted to this use; and in some ships, so little pains had been taken to cleanse these vessels, that the water was corrupted and stunk so abominably, that a man was fain to stop his nose with one hand, while with the other, he conveyed the can to his head. Nay, if every cask of water had been started over-board, it is well known that we might have been easily supplied by an expedient which is often practised, and was actually adopted by the troops on shore; I mean that of sinking half-tubs bored, in the beach, which are filled with potable water, strained through the pores of the sand.

'With respect to the allowance of brandy, granted to every individual, the Admiral, in his great sagacity, ordered it to be mixed in a proportion of the water, without sweetening or souring, so as to compose a most unpalatable drench, which no man could swallow without reluctance. . . .

'The sickness still continued to increase among the troops, and even infected the sailors to such a degree that they died in great numbers, and universal dejection prevailed. In order therefore to prevent the total ruin of the army and fleet, preparations were made to quit this inhospitable climate. The Spanish forts

in the possession of the English were all dismantled and blown up; and the whole fleet being wooded and watered for the voyage, fell down to Bocachica, from whence they set sail for Jamaica.

'Thus ended, in damage and disgrace, the ever-memorable expedition to Carthagena, undertaken with an armament, which if properly conducted, might have not only ruined the Spanish settlements in America, but even reduced the whole West Indies under the dominion of Great Britain.'

More than one writer has thought that the pictures that Smollett drew of the state of the personnel of the British navy attracted considerable attention, and was a primary cause of the introduction of many reformations.

When the fleet returned to Jamaica, Smollett was landed with one McCullum to act as assistant-surgeons to the troops. (It is on record that McCullum, who survived until 1810, 'always spoke in terms of high esteem' of his colleague.) Here he found some connections, amongst them a second cousin, Thomas Bontein. There, too, was another Bontein—Archibald—who published a map of Jamaica in 1753, as by 'His Majesty's Chief Engineer for the island during the late war'. Far more important was his meeting with a very good-looking Creole girl, Anne (Smollett called her Nancy) Lascelles, with whom he fell in love. She was an heiress, owning houses and slaves, and her fortune was estimated to be about £3000. When Smollett left Jamaica in 1743, it was understood that she would presently follow him to London and marry him there, when he had had an opportunity to establish himself as a surgeon. At the moment, apart from his pay, he had no means whatever. On his return to London, Smollett took his courage in both hands, and removed his name from the Navy books.

He then set up his plate in Downing Street, in the house that was vacant owing to the recent death of Dr. John Douglas, F.R.S., author of 'A Short Account of the State of Midwifery'—London, Westminster, etc. (1736).

'As for the particulars you expect from me, you must wait until I shall be better informed myself; for, to tell you an extraordinary truth, I do not know yet whether you had better congratulate or condole with me', he wrote to a Glasgow friend, Barclay, on May 22, 1744. 'I wish I was near you, that I might pour forth my heart before you, and make you judge of its dictates, and the several steps I have lately taken, in which case I am confident you and all honest men would acquit my principles, however my prudentials might be condemned. However, I have moved into the house where the late John Douglas, surgeon, died, and you may henceforth direct to Mr. Smollett, surgeon, in Downing Street, Westminster.'

The income from his practice was just about enough to enable Smollett to live in a very humble fashion; but it was not so considerable as to enable him to ask his future wife to come to England. He still believed, however, in his poetical gifts, and he was loyal as ever to his tragedy, which he had more than once revised. He hawked 'The Regicide' everywhere. It would appear that he sent it in 1743 to Charles Fleetwood, manager of Drury Lane Theatre; that early in 1745 he submitted it to Lacy, who had superseded Fleetwood; and in the following year invited John Rich, manager of Covent Garden, to read it. Quin also had a copy of the manuscript. Then the author decided to invoke the aid of patrons, and approached Lord Chesterfield, and there is in

Mr. Buck's work on Smollett a hitherto unpublished letter from Garrick to John Hoadly, dated September 14, 1746, which throws light on the adventures of the play:

'I have now with me a play, sent to me by my Lord Chesterfield, and wrote by our Smollett. It is a Scotch story, but it won't do, and yet recommended by his Lordship and patronised by Ladies of Quality, what can I say or do? Must I belie my judgment, or run the risk of being thought impertinent and disobliging the great folk? Some advice upon that head, if you please.'

Presently Smollett, presumably by invitation, called upon Garrick, and of this interview he made mention in 'Roderick Random'.

'The conversation turning upon my performance, I was not a little surprised, as well as pleased, to hear that Earl Sheerwit had spoken very much in its praise, and even sent Mr. Marmozet the copy, with a message expressing a desire that he would act in it next season. Nor was the favourite actor backward in commending the piece, which he mentioned with some expressions of regard that I do not choose to repeat; assuring me that he would appear in it, provided he should be engaged to play at all during the ensuing season.'

In the end Garrick decided not to produce it. To quote his biographer, 'Garrick did not warmly espouse the play. I believe he very cautiously and constantly referred him to the manager, Willoughby Lacy, with a promise that if it was to be played, he should have no objection to act a part in it'—an undertaking which, maybe, he felt himself quite safe in giving.

John Rich was also blind to its merits,[1] and Smollett presently took his revenge, and, referring to the pantomimes which Rich produced annually, attacked him in 'Reproof':

> Fraught with the spirit of a Gothic monk,
> Let Rich, with dulness and devotion drunk,
> Enjoy the peal so barbarous and loud,
> While his train spews monsters to the crowd.

Rich must have smiled at these lines emanating from a young, disappointed, unacted play-wright, for he had survived the famous Mr. Pope's ironical onslaught in 'The Dunciad':

> He look'd, and saw a sable sorcerer rise,
> Swift to whose hand a winged volume flies;
> All sudden, gorgons hiss, and dragons glare,
> And ten horn'd fiends and giants rush to war.
> Hell rises, heaven descends, and dance on earth,
> Gods, imps and monsters, music, rage and mirth;
> A fire, a jig, a battle, and a ball,
> Till one wide conflagration swallow all.

Smollett's most desperate anger was directed against the scholarly George (afterwards first Baron) Lyttelton, the friend of Pope and patron of the Scotch poet, James Thomson, for whom he obtained a sinecure, and of that other Scotsman, David Mallet, for whom he obtained a secretaryship. Lyttelton was sent the play, and, it is said, neglected to read it. This the author could not for years forgive. When Mrs. Lyttelton died in July 1747, her husband deplored her loss in an indifferently-written but obviously sincere 'Monody'. Smollett had the bad taste to compose

[1] About 1746, according to Dr. Chalmers, Smollett wrote for Rich the libretto of an opera called 'Alceste', but the libretto was never produced.

GEORGE, FIRST BARON LYTTELTON

From a Portrait by G. H. Every

a ' Burlesque Ode ' in which he affected to bewail the loss of his grandmother.

Ill doth it now beseem,
That thou shouldst doze and dream,
When Death in mortal armour came,
And struck with ruthless dart the gentle dame.
Her lib'ral hand and sympathising breast
The brute creation kindly bless'd:
Where'er she trod grimalkin purr'd around,
The squeaking pigs her bounty own'd;
Nor to the waddling duck or gabbling goose
Did she glad sustenance refuse;
The strutting cock she daily fed,
And turkey with his snout so red;
Of chickens careful as the pious hen,
Nor did she overlook the tomtit or the wren;
While redbreast hopp'd before her in the hall,
As if she common mother were of all.
For my distracted mind
What comfort can I find;
O best of grannams! thou are dead and gone,
And I am left behind to weep and moan,
To sing thy dirge in sad funereal lay,
Ah! woe is me! alack! and well-a-day!

Lyttelton, it was said by Arthur Murphy, was, after this, in such fear of Smollett, that for several years he withheld from publication his ' History of the Life of Henry II '.

In ' Roderick Random ' the life-history of Melopoyn, as related by the latter in the Marshalsea, is undoubtedly the story of Smollett and ' The Regicide ', and in it he caricatures Fleetwood as Supple, Garrick as Marmozet, Lacy as Brayer, Quin as Bellower, Rich as Vandal, and Chesterfield as Earl Sheerwit.

When in 1749, after the success of his first novel, Smollett published, by a five-shilling subscription, ' The Regicide ', he returned to the attack in a Preface (printed in this volume as an Appendix), and bitterly inveighed against the arrogance, stupidity,

and indifference of those who had failed to appreciate the tragedy.

It is more pleasant to recall that time softened Smollett's feelings, and brought to him a more just appreciation of the man he had sought as a patron.

To something of the bitterness within him at this time Smollett gave vent in two duologues, each between Poet and Friend, 'Advice' and 'Reproof', issued respectively in 1746 and 1747:

> If such be life, its wretches I deplore,
> And long to quit th' inhospitable shore.

During these years Smollett led the ordinary life of the middle-class man about town, he frequented the coffee-houses, where he soon became known. It is, however, unlikely that he was popular with his acquaintances, for, though more than ordinarily kind-hearted, he was apt normally to be overbearing, surly, regardless of their feelings. He tried to cover his disappointments by an air of superiority. At this time it embittered him to see others successful, while he remained unknown and poor; and the feeling was aggravated by the knowledge within him that he had the making of a great man, yet could not discover in what direction he could distinguish himself.

His principal house of call was that mainly frequented by his fellow-countrymen, the British Coffee-house, which was in Cockspur Street, between Warwick Street and Spring Gardens, and was still standing in the eighties of the last century. It was kept by a Scotswoman, Mrs. Anderson, a sister of that John Douglas who many years later was Bishop of Salisbury. Among the frequenters were Robert Smith, commonly known as 'the Duke of Roxburgh's Smith'; the Rev. John Blair, an Edinburgh man, at this time a schoolmaster in London, presently Chaplain to the Princess-Dowager

of Wales, and later a Prebendary of Westminster, and still remembered as the author of the 'Chronology of the World from the Creation to 1753'; and a Captain Lyon, who introduced Smollett to Alexander Carlyle. 'We four,' says Carlyle in his Autobiography, 'with one or two more, frequently resorted to a small tavern in the corner of Cockspur Street at the Golden Ball, where we had a frugal supper and a little punch, as the finances of none of the company were in good order. But we had rich enough conversation on literary subjects, which was enlivened by Smollett's agreeable stories, which he told with peculiar grace.'

'Inheriting the Whig principles of his family,' James Hannay said of him, 'Smollett had doubtless, while the Revolution lasted, as little sympathy with it as any subject of King George, but the Scot was still stronger in him than the Whig. . . . Whiggism was absorbed in a sudden access of *amor patria*, and there was not a wilder patriot to be found in London.' It was, probably, the stories of the atrocities inflicted upon the rebels in the north that circulated in London, which roused his ire, and resulted in the composition of the verses, 'The Tears of Scotland'.

The tale told by Robert Graham of Gartmore may be given here for what it is worth. It was either at the British Coffee-house or at Forrest's that Alexander Carlyle foregathered with Robert Smith and John Stuart, son of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and Smollett, on the evening of April 23, 1746, when the news reached London of the battle of Culloden; Stuart, whose father was in the Tower, under suspicion of having favoured the Young Pretender's entry into Edinburgh, was naturally, as befitted a Jacobite, much upset. Smollett, however, took the news calmly. After discussing the matter, the three men left the coffee-house, and found the streets crowded with

hilarious folk. It was no night for Scotsmen to be upon the town, and Smollett, who was more at home in London than the others, conducted them to their lodgings. 'The mob', Carlyle noted in his Autobiography, 'were so riotous, and the squibs and crackers so incessant, that we were glad to go into a narrow entry to put our wigs in our pockets, and to take our swords from our belts, and walk with them in our hands, as everybody then wore swords; and after cautioning me against speaking a word, lest the mob should discover my country and become insolent, "for John Bull", says Smollett, "is as haughty and valiant to-night as he was abject and cowardly on the Black Wednesday when the Highlanders were at Derby." After we got to the head of the Haymarket, through incessant fire, the Doctor led me by narrow lanes, where we met nobody but a few boys at a pitiful bonfire, who very civilly asked us for sixpence, which I gave them.'

Smollett, Robert Graham said, composed his poem, 'The Tears of Scotland', in a room at a tavern while some of the company were playing cards. Presently, he read them the first draft of the six stanzas, after which some friend pointed out to him that it would be impolitic to print it, as it must certainly give offence to the Government, whereupon, indignant, he took up his pen, and added the following lines:

> While the warm blood bedews my veins,
> And unimpaired remembrance reigns,
> Resentment of my country's fate
> Within my filial breast shall beat;
> And, spite of her insulting foe,
> My sympathising verse shall flow:
> 'Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn,
> Thy banished peace, thy laurels torn!'

Chapter IV

1746–1748

Marries Anne Lascelles—Monmouth House, Chelsea—Dr. John Moore's description of Smollett—Smollett's account of himself—'Ferdinand Count Fathom'—Estimates of him by Scott and Hazlitt—His friends—Publishes 'The Adventures of Roderick Random' anonymously—Admits his indebtedness to Le Sage—How far 'Roderick Random' is autobiographical—The 'original' of Strap—The women in his novels—Smollett a moralist.

SMOLLETT did not thrive as a surgeon, for, according to Alexander Carlyle, he, at some time before April 1746, left the house in Downing Street for Mayfair—it is said that he lived in humble lodgings in Curzon Street, which certainly was not the fashionable and expensive quarter it is to-day. In January 1747 Anne Lascelles came from Jamaica to marry him, and on the strength of her dowry it is believed that he took a new house—where is not known—and began to entertain in a modest fashion. Of Smollett's married life little or nothing is known. His wife has been described as 'a fine lady, but a silly woman', and there is no doubt that her stupidity often irritated her husband, who at best was generally peevish. At Chelsea he would often escape from home to Don Saltero's Coffee-house, at No. 18 Cheyne Walk, near by. On the whole, however, he was fond enough of his Creole beauty, and they were never apart for any length of time. He was entirely faithful to her, and

in a letter written to an American correspondent in 1763, was careful to make the point that the amorous adventures upon which he embarked his heroes had no counterpart in his own life. In 1748 a daughter, Elizabeth, the only child of the union, was born.

On the strength of his wife's fortune Smollett rented Monmouth House, at the upper end of Lawrence Street. It has been advanced that they did not go there until after he went to Bath, and the date of his entering into possession is usually given as 1753, but there is a letter to Dr. Moore (printed in the next chapter), which is dated, 'Chelsea, September 28, 1750'. Monmouth House was the original Lawrence Manor House, but its name was changed when it became the residence of the widow of Charles II's son, the Duke of Monmouth. The house has since been pulled down, and the gardens have become the playing-ground of a board-school; but the curious will find an engraving in Smith's 'Antiquarian Curiosities'.

An interesting account of Smollett and his mode of life at Chelsea has been written by Dr. Moore:

'The person of Smollett was stout and well proportioned, his countenance engaging, his manner reserved, with a certain air of dignity that seemed to indicate that he was not unconscious of his own powers. He was of a disposition so humane and generous, that he was ever ready to serve the unfortunate, and on some occasions to assist them beyond what his circumstances could justify. Though few could penetrate with more acuteness into character, yet none was more apt to overlook misconduct when attended with misfortune.

'He lived in an hospitable manner, but he despised that hospitality which is founded on ostentation,

which entertains only those whose situation in life flatters the vanity of the entertainer, or such as can make returns of the same kind, that hospitality which keeps a debtor and creditor account of dinners. Smollett invited to his plain but plentiful table the persons whose characters he esteemed, in whose conversation he delighted, and many for no other reason than because they stood in need of his countenance and protection.

'As nothing was more abhorrent to his nature than pertness or intrusion, few things could render him more indignant than a cold reception; to this, however, he imagined he had sometimes been exposed on his application in favour of others: for himself he never made an application to any great man in his life.

'Free from *vanity*, Smollett had a considerable share of pride, and great sensibility: his passions were easily moved, and too impetuous when roused: he could not conceal his contempt of folly, his detestation of fraud, nor refrain from proclaiming his indignation against every instance of oppression.

'Though Smollett possessed a versatility of style in writing, which he could accommodate to every character, he had no suppleness in his conduct. His learning, diligence, and natural acuteness would have rendered him eminent in the science of medicine, had he persevered in that profession: other parts of his character were ill-suited for augmenting his practice. He could neither stoop to impose on credulity nor humour caprice.

'He was of an intrepid, independent, imprudent disposition, equally incapable of deceit and adulation, and more disposed to cultivate the acquaintance of those he could serve, than of those who could serve him. What wonder that a man of his character was not, what is called, successful in life!'

There can be little doubt but that Smollett, when writing for 'Ferdinand Count Fathom' the 'Dedication to Dr.*****', was setting down a portrait of himself as he saw himself:

'Know, then, I can despise your pride, while I honour your integrity; and applaud your taste, while I am shocked at your ostentation. I have known you trifling, superficial, and obstinate in dispute; meanly jealous and awkwardly reserved; rash and haughty in your resentments; and coarse and lowly in your connections. I have blushed at the weakness of your conversation, and trembled at the errors of your conduct. Yet, as I own, you possess certain good qualities, which overbalance these defects, and distinguish you on this occasion as a person for whom I have the most perfect attachment and esteem; you have no cause to complain of the indelicacy with which your faults are reprehended, and as they are chiefly the excesses of a sanguine disposition and looseness of thought, impatient of caution or control, you may, thus stimulated, watch over your intemperance and infirmity, and for the future profit by the severity of my reproof.'

Smollett's estimate of himself is supported by the testimony of Sir Walter Scott, who though born in the year of Smollett's death, yet doubtless heard much of him from those who had known him:

'Of his disposition, those who have read his works (and who has not?) may form a very accurate estimate; for in each of them he has presented, and sometimes, under varying points of view, the leading features of his own character without disguising the most unfavourable of them. . . . When unseduced by his satirical propensities, he was kind, generous, and humane to

others; bold, upright, and independent in his own character; stooped to no patron, sued for no favour, but honestly and honourably maintained himself on his literary labours.'

And Scott is corroborated by Leigh Hunt:

'Smollett had a strong spice of pride and malice in him (greatly owing, we doubt not, to some scenes of unjust treatment he witnessed in early youth) which he imparts to his heroes; all of whom, probably, are caricatures of himself, as Fielding's brawny, good-natured, idle fellows are of *him*. There is no serious ill-intention, however. It is all out of resentment of some evil, real or imaginary; or is made up of pure animal spirit and the love of venting a complexional sense of power. It is energy, humour, and movement, not particularly amiable, but clever, entertaining, and interesting, and without an atom of hypocrisy in it. No man will learn to be shabby by reading Smollett's writings.'

Smollett by this time had gathered around him a circle of friends, among whom were many of his countrymen who were pursuing the profession of medicine in London—Dr. Clephane; Dr. Dickson (afterwards physician to the London Hospital); Dr. John Armstrong, author of 'The Art of Preserving Health'; Dr. George Macaulay, a noted obstetrician; John Hunter, the famous anatomist; Dr. William Pitcairn, physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London; and Dr. William Smellie. With Smellie Smollett was intimate, though the other was twenty-four years his junior. Both had come to London in the same year (1739), and Smellie within a few years had established a reputation as a teacher and practitioner of midwifery. It is on record that in 1748

Smollett communicated to Smellie notes on an interesting case, 'Separation of the Pubic Joint'; and that six years later, he, as he himself mentions in a letter to Dr. John Moore, saw through the press the second volume of Smellie's 'Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Midwifery'. It may well be that he did a similar service for the other volumes.

Apart from the tie of professional interests, these men were bound together by the extraordinary prejudice then entertained against Scotsmen, which arose mainly out of ignorance. 'The people at the other end of the island know as little of Scotland as of Japan,' Smollett wrote in 'Humphry Clinker'; in which book he made further indignant reference to the matter:

'From Doncaster northwards, all the windows of all the inns are scrawled with doggerel rhymes, in abuse of the Scottish nation; and what surprised me very much, I did not perceive one line written in the way of recrimination. Curious to hear what Lismahago would say on this subject, I pointed out to him a very scurrilous epigram against his countrymen, which was engraved on one of the windows of the parlour where we sat. He read it with the most starched composure; and when I asked his opinion of the poetry, "It is vara terse and vara poignant," he said; "but with the help of a wat dish-clout, it might be rendered more clear and parspicuous. I marvel much that some modern wit has not published a collection of these essays under the title of the 'Glazier's Triumph over Sawney, the Scot'; I'm persuaded it would be a vara agreeable offering to the patriots of London and Westminster." When I expressed some surprise that the natives of Scotland, who travel this way, had not broke all the windows upon the road, "With submission", replied the lieutenant, "that were but shallow policy—

it would only serve to make the satire more cutting and severe; and, I think, it is much better to let it stand in the window, than have it presented in the reckoning."

'My uncle [Matt. Bramble]'s jaws began to quiver with indignation. He said, the scribblers of such infamous stuff deserved to be scourged at the cart's tail for disgracing their country with such monuments of malice and stupidity. "These vermin", said he, "do not consider that they are affording their fellow subjects, whom they abuse, continual matter of self-gratulation, as well as the means of executing the most manly vengeance that can be taken for such low, illiberal attacks. For my part, I admire the philosophic forbearance of the Scotch, as much as I despise the insolence of those wretched libellers, which is akin to the arrogance of the village cock, who never crows except upon his own dunghill.'

When Smollett first conceived the idea of writing a work of fiction is not known. The English novel was in its infancy. Richardson had brought out 'Pamela' at the end of 1740, and Fielding early in 1743 had retorted with 'The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews and his friend Mr. Abraham Adams', and in the following year published 'Jonathan Wild the Great'. There was room for another novelist, and Smollett proceeded to fill the breach. 'The Adventures of Roderick Random' appeared anonymously in 1748 when the author was twenty-seven years of age.

'Roderick Random' is a story in the picaresque style, and the author frankly admitted his very obvious indebtedness to Le Sage:

'The same method has been practised by other Spanish and French authors, and by none more

successfully than by Monsieur Le Sage, who, in his "Adventures of Gil Blas", has described the knavery and foibles of life, with infinite humour and sagacity. The following sheets I have modelled on his plan, taking the liberty, however, to differ from him in the execution, where I thought his particular situations were uncommon, extravagant, or peculiar to the country in which the scene is laid. The disgraces of Gil Blas are, for the most part, such as rather excite mirth than compassion: he himself laughs at them; and his transitions from distress to happiness, or at least ease, are so sudden, that neither the reader has time to pity him, nor himself to be acquainted with affliction. This conduct, in my opinion, not only deviates from probability, but prevents that generous indignation which ought to animate the reader against the sordid and vicious disposition of the world.

'I have attempted to represent modest merit struggling with every difficulty to which a friendless orphan is exposed, from his own want of experience, as well as from the selfishness, envy, malice, and base indifference of mankind. To secure a favourable prepossession, I have allowed him the advantages of birth and education, which, in the series of his misfortunes, will, I hope, engage the ingenuous more warmly in his behalf, and though I foresee that some people will be offended at the mean scenes in which he is involved, I persuade myself the judicious will not only perceive the necessity of describing those situations to which he must of course be confined, in his low state, but also find entertainment in viewing those parts of life, where the humours and passions are undisguised by affectation, ceremony, or education; and the whimsical peculiarities of disposition appear as nature has implanted them. But I believe I need not trouble myself in vindicating a practice authorised by

the best writers in this way, some of whom I have already named.

'Every intelligent reader will, at first sight, perceive I have not deviated from nature in the facts, which are all true in the main, although the circumstances are altered and disguised to avoid personal satire.'

This first novel, like, indeed, the later and more mature works of the author, suffers from a lack of imagination in incident. Smollett was always content—he could not, in fact, be other—to be, as it were, the historian in fiction. He always fell back on his own experiences for a background—and then proceeded to embroider them; he drew on his friends and enemies for his characters—and then he caricatured them. In all his books there is at least an inch of fact to every ell of fiction. He could not invent: he could only exaggerate. As Thackeray put it: 'He did not invent much, as I fancy, but had the keenest perceptive faculty, and described what he saw with wonderful relish and delightful broad humour.' On the other hand, readers of Smollett's novels must disabuse themselves of the idea that these are in the main autobiographical. This is far from being the case. Smollett did not write his stories as a means for autobiography; even when there is the same incident in his life as in the career of one or other of his characters it is differently treated.

To give an instance of what has just been said. The opening paragraph of 'Roderick Random' is more or less true as regards its author:

'I was born in the northern part of this united kingdom, in the house of my grandfather; a gentleman of considerable fortune and influence, who had, on many occasions, signalised himself in behalf of his

country; and was remarkable for his abilities in the law, which he exercised with great success, in the station of a judge, particularly against beggars, for whom he had a singular aversion.'

The narrative continues:

'My father, his youngest son, falling in love with a poor relation, who lived with the old gentleman in quality of housekeeper, espoused her privately; and I was the first fruit of that marriage.'

This, too, is accurate enough in the main, though there is no reason to believe that Miss Cunningham was a relation, or that she was ever housekeeper to Sir James Smollett. Also, it may be that Sir James, on hearing of the secret marriage of his youngest son, addressed him in such terms as old Random addressed Roderick's father:

'Your brothers and sisters did not think it beneath them to consult me in an affair of such importance as matrimony; neither, I suppose, would you have omitted that piece of duty, had not you some secret fund in reserve, to the comforts of which I leave you, with a desire that you will this night seek out another habitation for yourself and wife, whither, in a short time, I will send you an account of the expense, I have been at in your education, with a view of being reimbursed. Sir, you have made the great tour;—you are a polite gentleman,—a very pretty gentleman;—I wish you a great deal of joy, and am your very humble servant.'

The story of 'Roderick Random' is simple in the extreme. The hero, if he may for convenience sake be so miscalled, is a Scotsman:

'It now remains to give my reasons for making

the chief personage of this work a North Briton; which are chiefly these: I could not at a small expense bestow on him such education as I thought the dignity of his birth and character required, which could not possibly be obtained in England, by such slender means as the nature of my plan would afford. In the next place, I could represent simplicity of manners in a remote part of the kingdom, with more propriety than in any other place near the capital; and, lastly, the disposition of the Scots, addicted to travelling, justifies my conduct in deriving an adventurer from that country.'

Roderick comes to town with a letter of introduction that secures him an appointment as naval surgeon; he takes part in the Carthagena expedition; he stays for a while in the West Indies; he returns penniless; takes a job as a footman, and falls in love with his mistress's beautiful daughter, Narcissa; goes abroad, and enlists in the Regiment of Picardy; gets his discharge through the influence of M. Estrape, who is none other than his old barber-companion, Strap, who has come with him from Scotland to London; returns to England; and having won some money at gaming, goes to Bath in the guise of a well-to-do man of fashion; is thrown into the Marshalsea for debt, where he meets Melopoyn—of whom something has already been said; is rescued by his sailor uncle, Tom Bowling; goes with his relative on a trading expedition to South America; amasses money; discovers at Buenos Aires his long-lost father, who promptly settles on him £15,000, so that he can return to England and marry Narcissa. The account of his transports on the marriage night leave nothing to the imagination. This is all that there is to 'Roderick Random' in the way of plot. As Sir

Walter Scott put it: '"Roderick Random" may be considered as an imitation of Le Sage, as the hero flits through almost every scene of public and private life, recording, as he paints his own adventures, the manners of the times, with all their various shades and diversities of colouring; but forming no connected plot or story the several parts of which hold connexion with, or bear proportion to each other.'

In 'Roderick Random' it is incidents rather than characters upon which the author depends for his appeal to the reader. Roderick is definite enough—a bully, a braggart, a cad, a gambler, and a fortune-hunter. As has been said, Melopoyn is a mere mouthpiece for the venting of Smollett's grievances about 'The Regicide', and his narrative is just a first draft of the Preface to that play.

A controversy has raged as to the prototype of the devoted Strap. Several candidates have been put forward for the doubtful honour. The 'Annual Register' for 1771 has among its deaths: 'Mr. Duncan Rivers, bailiff of Glasgow; the person it is said, from whom Dr. Smollett took his character of Strap in "Roderick Random".' The *Monthly Magazine* for May 1809 records the death at The Lodge, Villiers Street, Adelphi, of Hugh Hewson, at the age of eighty-five, and states that he, who for forty years had kept a hair-dresser's shop not far from Charing Cross, was 'the identical Hugh Strap, whom Dr. Smollett has rendered so interesting', etc.; and John Francis in 'Notes and Queries' printed an extract from an article in an old newspaper of April 1809, headed 'Smollett's celebrated Hugh Strap', which would appear to substantiate the claim:

'On Sunday was interred, in the burial-ground of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, the remains of Hugh

Hewson, who died at the age of 85. The deceased was a man of no mean celebrity. He had passed more than forty years in the parish of St. Martin's, and kept a hair dresser's shop, being no less a personage than the identical Hugh Strap, whom Dr. Smollett rendered so conspicuously interesting in his "Life and Adventures of Roderick Random". The deceased was a very intelligent man, and took delight in recounting the scenes of his early life. He spoke with pleasure of the time he passed in the service of the Doctor; and it was his pride, as well as boast, to say, that he had been educated at the same seminary with so learned and distinguished a character. His shop was hung round with Latin quotations, and he would frequently point out to his acquaintances the several scenes in "Roderick Random", pertaining to himself, which had their foundation not in the Doctor's inventive fancy, but in truth reality. The Doctor's meeting with him at a barber's shop at Newcastle-on-Tyne, the subsequent mistake at the Inn, their arrival together in London, and the assistance they experienced from Strap's friend, were all of that description. The deceased, to the last, obtained a comfortable subsistence by his industry, and of late years had been paid a weekly salary by the inhabitants of the Adelphi, for keeping the entrances to Villier's-Walk and securing the promenade from the intrusion of strangers.'

Weight of evidence is, however, in favour of one Lewis. 'Mr. Lewis, of Chelsea, who died in 1783, used to bind the books for, and enjoy the company and conversation of the first literary men of the day, and was generally supposed to have been the original of Strap, in "Roderick Random",' John Nichols noted in his 'Literary Anecdotes'. 'Mrs. Lewis often assured the writer of this article, that her husband

denied the assertions of many people, as often as it was mentioned to him; but there is every reason to suppose him to have been the person Smollett had in view, as they came out of Scotland together, and, when Smollett lived at Chelsea, Mr. Lewis used to dine every Sunday with him.' Confirmation of Nichols' belief is to be found in a letter, hitherto unpublished (preserved in the Manuscript Department of the British Museum), written by Smollett to his publisher, John Rivington:

'CHELSEA, *April* 14, 1757.

'Dear Sir,

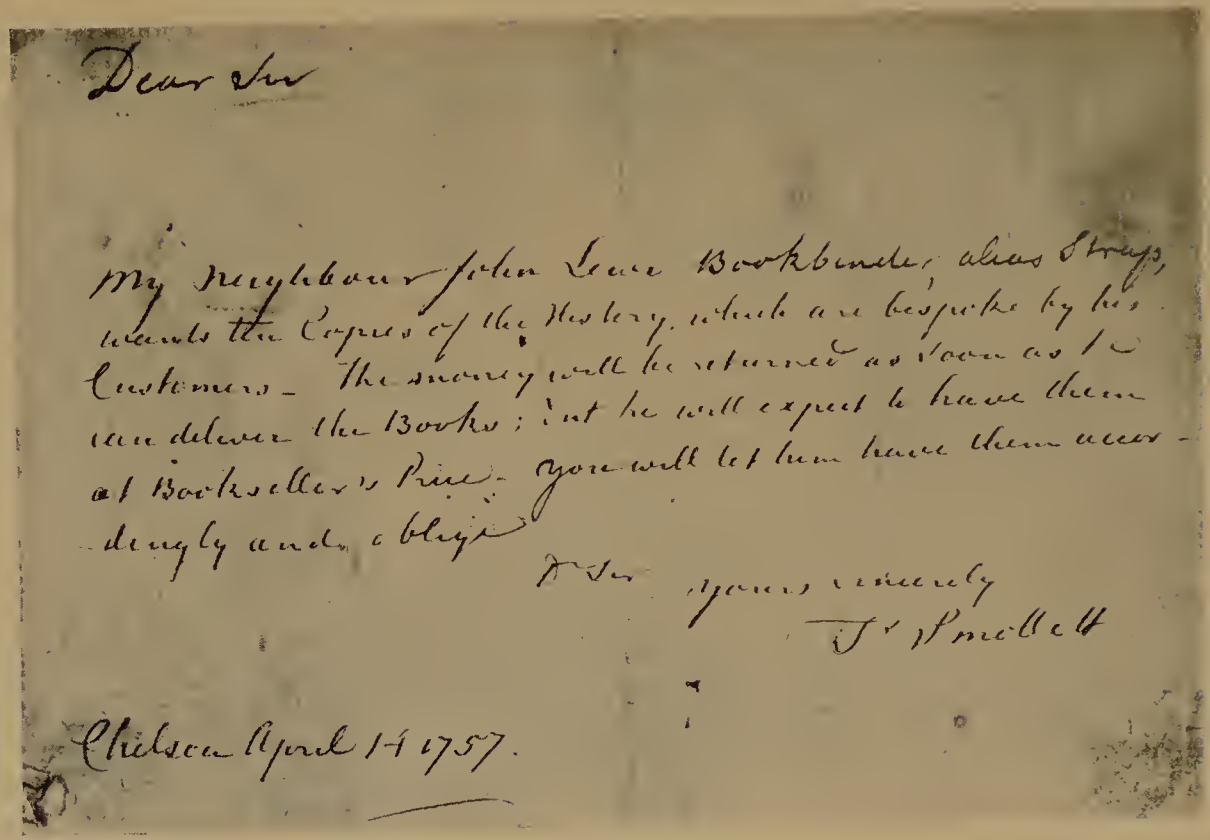
'My neighbour, John Lewis, bookseller, *alias* Strap, wants ten copies of the History, which are bespoke by his customers. The money will be returned as soon as he can deliver the books; but he will expect to have them at bookseller's price. You will let him have them accordingly and oblige

'Dear Sir,

'Yours sincerely,

'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

Most of the women in 'Roderick Random' are vastly unpleasing. Miss Lavement, daughter of the apothecary in whose service the hero is for a while, is a detestable person. Miss Williams, who tells her own story, of how she fell upon evil days, most certainly deserved her fate, and it was really unfair for her presently to be made to reappear as lady's-maid to Narcissa. As for Narcissa (said to be drawn from Mrs. Smollett), she, in spite of her beauty, is a simpering noodle, and never shows a spark of life. Roderick, as has been said, was acting as footman to her mother when he first saw her, and he fell head over ears in love:



Dear Sir

My neighbour John Lewis Bookbinder, alias Straps, wants ten Copies of the History, which are bespoke by his Customers. The money will be returned as soon as I can deliver the Books; but he will expect to have them at Bookseller's Price. You will let him have them accordingly and oblige

Dr Sir yours sincerely

Tr Smollett

Chelsea April 14 1757.

FACSIMILE OF AN AUTOGRAPH LETTER IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

'So much sweetness appeared in the countenance and carriage of this amiable apparition, that my heart was captivated at first sight, and, while dinner lasted, I gazed upon her without intermission. Her age seemed to be seventeen, her stature tall, her shape unexceptionable; her hair, that fell down upon her ivory neck in ringlets, black as jet, her arched eyebrows of the same colour; her eyes piercing, yet tender; her lips of the consistence and hue of cherries; her complexion clear, delicate, and healthy; her aspect noble, ingenuous, and humane; and the whole person so ravishingly delightful, that it was impossible for any creature endued with sensibility, to see without admiring, and admire without loving to excess! I began to curse the servile station that placed me so far beneath the regard of this idol of my adoration! and yet I blessed my fate, that enabled me to enjoy daily the sight of so much perfection! When she spoke, I listened with pleasure; but when she spoke to me, my soul was thrilled with an ecstasy of tumultuous joy!'

When Roderick thought that he had lost her his agonies were terrible:

'In vain did I fly for refuge to the amusements of the place, and engage in the parties of Jackson, at cards, billiards, ninepins, and fives; a train of melancholy thoughts took possession of my soul, which even the conversation of Melopoyn could not divert. I ordered Strap to inquire every day at Banter's lodgings in expectation of hearing again from my charmer; and my disappointment considerably augmented my chagrin. My affectionate valet was infected with my sorrow, and often sat with me whole hours without speaking, uttering sigh for sigh, and shedding tear

for tear. This fellowship increased our distemper; he became incapable of business, and was discarded by his master; while I, seeing my money melt away, without any certainty of deliverance, and, in short, all my hopes frustrated, grew negligent of life, lost all appetite, and degenerated into such a sloven, that during the space of two months, I was neither washed, shifted, nor shaved; so that my face rendered meagre with abstinence, was obscured with dirt, and overshadowed with hair, and my whole appearance squalid and even frightful.'

There remains only to mention Miss Snapper, the one woman in the book who has a spark of wit:

'The celebrated Mr. Nash, who commonly attends in this place, as master of the ceremonies, perceiving the disposition of the assembly, took upon himself the task of gratifying their ill-nature still further, by exposing my mistress to the edge of his wit. With this view he approached us, with many bows and grimaces, and, after having welcomed Miss Snapper to the place, asked her, in the hearing of all present, if she could inform him the name of Tobit's dog. I was so much incensed at his insolence that I should certainly have kicked him where he stood, without ceremony, had not the young lady prevented the effects of my indignation, by replying, with the utmost vivacity, "His name was Nash, and an impudent dog he was".'[1]

It is usually said of Smollett that he thought 'Roderick Random' a fine fellow, and Miss Williams a pathetic creature, and so on. But was this really the

[1] It is interesting to note that this story was inserted in 'The Jests of Beau Nash' (1763).

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case? Roderick is such an unutterable scamp, Miss Williams, such a poor, amorous, half-witted girl, that really the contention should give us pause. Of course, the domesticated respectable man—be he an author or another—often has a sneaking regard for the man-about-town; but it is happily not often carried to the extreme that Smollett must have carried it if he regarded Roderick as a hero. The characters in the book are all unworthy. Not one of them does a stroke of work so far as can be gathered, except Melopoyn, and he appears to have regarded the composition of a play or two as a lifetime's labour. All seem to have cultivated, for the most part unsuccessfully rather than successfully, the useful art of living well on nothing a year. When they are not cheating one another, or failing to cheat one another, they are gaming. When they win they spend their winnings; when they lose they do not seem a penny the worse—in fact, they just do not pay. Whenever they have an hour to spare, they make love to the nearest person in the crudest possible way, and, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the love-making is illicit and purely an adventure in the hopes of satisfying carnal desires.

Did Smollett really believe that the world of his day was made up of such persons? Did he really not know that there were all around him men of honour and women whose virtue was unassailable?—he who was as honest as the day, temperate, and a clean liver. It is inconceivable. If it was not his sole object to become a 'best-seller', what was, then, his purpose? Perhaps a clue may be found in the last paragraph of the Preface to 'Roderick Random'.

'That the delicate reader may not be offended at the unmeaning oaths which proceed from the mouths

of some persons in these memoirs, I beg leave to premise, that I imagined nothing could more effectually expose the absurdity of such expletives, than a natural and verbal representation of the discourse in which they occur.'

If oaths can be made absurd by exaggeration, why not the indiscriminate chasing of women, the useless lives of wastrel men? Irony is the most dangerous weapon in the literary arsenal: it, more often than not, acts as a boomerang. 'Jonathan Wild' was read as an interesting account of that scoundrel, and not as Fielding intended it. Was not 'Roderick Random' intended, not as a glorification of the many startling indecencies, may not these, too, have been deliberately set down by Smollett for the same purpose as he introduced foul language?

Chapter V

1749–1752

He translates 'Gil Blas'—Visits Paris—Mark Akenside—'The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle'—'Memoirs of a Lady of Quality'—Lady Vane—The death of Commodore Trunnion—The second edition of 'Peregrine Pickle'—Smollett again attacks Lyttelton—His quarrel with Fielding—'Habbakkuk Hilding'—Smollett as novelist.

PROBABLY while he was still writing 'Roderick Random', Smollett was engaged on a translation of 'Gil Blas', to which book his own story was so much indebted. This appeared in four volumes in 1749, and was so favourably received that a second edition appeared the next year. It has since been reprinted again and again. It is unlikely that it was for Smollett a labour of love, or even of gratitude: it was done at the request of the booksellers, and primarily for money.

The money that was paid for this translation, together with the sums he received from the sales of 'Roderick Random', was badly wanted by Smollett. Among other things he was enabled to indulge himself with a visit to Paris in the summer of 1750—a visit which may have been undertaken for reasons of health, for Smollett was a man of weak constitution, and probably already inclined to the consumption of which he died.

The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, concluded in October 1748, had reopened France to British subjects

and already, when Smollett arrived at Paris, a small British colony had established itself there. At this time John Moore, a young Scotch doctor of twenty years of age, was staying there. When he had come to London some time earlier, he had brought with him a letter of introduction from John Gordon, to whom he, like Smollett, had been apprenticed during his student days at Glasgow University. There was eight years' difference in age between Smollett and Moore, but they at once cemented a friendship that endured through life. Moore, who was father of the hero of Coruña, became a man of considerable distinction, and was presently well known as an authority on European travel, and the author of 'Zeluco'. About a quarter of a century after the death of the novelist, Moore edited his works and prefaced them with a Memoir, based mainly on personal recollections, which is a primary authority for any biographer of Smollett.

Moore took Smollett to St. Cloud, to Versailles, and to other places in the neighbourhood of Paris, all of which was new ground to the visitor, who had not before been on the Continent. Also, Moore, of course, introduced him to the circle of his acquaintances, most of the members of which, it would seem, were British. Some writers say that Smollett looked at these men with the idea of 'copy' for the new novel he had already begun, but it may be suggested that this is going too far. It was not, probably, that he was spoiling a holiday by searching for eccentrics: it is more likely that 'taking his goods where he saw them', and two eccentrics coming his way he improved the occasion, and snatched them for the purpose of adding them to the gallery of his caricature portraits.

One of the men was an English painter, whom Smollett met at the picture-galleries and at the coffee-

houses, and who irritated him beyond measure by talking in season and out of season about *vertu*—him he drew as the ridiculous Pallet in ' Peregrine Pickle '.

The other was Mark Akenside, poet and physician, exactly the same age as Smollett. At seventeen he had begun the poem by which he is still best remembered, ' The Pleasures of Imagination '. Shortly after, he went to Edinburgh to study for the Church, but soon abandoned the idea of taking orders, and attended the medical classes. In 1750 he was a well-known physician, practising in London. It has been said of him that he was ' of an ardent temperament, fond of the ancient Greek literature, and more in love with Greek republicanism '. Anyhow, his hatred and contempt of all modern political institutions grated on the novelist, who lampooned him cruelly as the Physician in ' Peregrine Pickle '. But the real reason for the caricature may well have been that the novelist had heard that Akenside, after coming down from Edinburgh, had said unkind things about Scotland and Scotsmen.

If Smollett could be brutal, he could also be tender. In fact, though he had an eye for the ridiculous that not infrequently carried him too far, he was as kind-hearted a man as could be met—that is to say, to those in trouble. At Paris there were a number of Scotsmen living in exile, who had fled to the Continent after the failure of the Rebellion of '45. One of these, Mr. Hunter of Burnsyde in Forfarshire, told Smollett how sad they were at being absent from their native land, and how he and his friends, when at Boulogne, walked daily to the beach ' in order to indulge their longing eyes with a prospect of the white cliffs of Albion which they must never more approach'. Smollett was much touched by the picture of these unfortunate gentlemen, and made sympathetic reference to it in ' Peregrine Pickle ':

'Though our young gentleman differed widely from them in point of political principles, he was not one of those enthusiasts who look upon every schism from the established articles of faith as d——nable, and exclude the sceptic from every benefit of humanity and Christian forgiveness. He could easily comprehend how a man of the most unblemished morals might, by the prejudice of education, or indispensable attachments, be engaged in such a blameworthy and pernicious undertaking; and thought that they already suffered severely for their imprudence. He was affected with the account of their diurnal pilgrimage to the seaside, which he considered as a pathetic proof of their affliction, and invested Mr. Jolter with the agreeable office of going to them with a compliment in his name, and begging the honour of drinking a glass with them in the evening. They accepted the proposal with great satisfaction and respectful acknowledgment, and in the afternoon waited upon the kind inviter, who treated them with coffee, and would have detained them to supper; but they entreated the favour of his company at the house which they frequented, so earnestly, that he yielded to their solicitations, and with his governor was conducted by them to the place, where they had provided an elegant repast, and regaled them with some of the best claret in France.'

Indeed, Smollett did more than portray them in the novel; on his return he endeavoured to be of direct service to one of them.

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'Chelsea, *September* 28, 1750.

'I thank you for those curious criticisms on "Roderick Random" which you have communicated;

and congratulate you upon your prospect of enjoying a comfortable settlement among your friends. I have been favoured with two letters from Mr. Hunter of Burnsyde, the first of which was shown to the Duke of Dorset by Lady Vane, who spoke of the author as a gentleman worthy of the Government's clemency and protection, and represented his case and character in such an advantageous light, that the Duke expressed an inclination to befriend him, and advised Lord Vane to speak to his cousin, the Duke of Newcastle, in his behalf—this task his Lordship has undertaken, and there the affair must rest till the King's return. Make my compliments to your mother, and take it for granted that I am your sincere friend and humble servant,

'Ts. Smollett.'

'The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle', which was published in 1751, was an immediate success, or, perhaps it would be more accurate to say, that on its first appearance it had a *succès de scandale*. The portraits of the Painter and the Physician were much debated; and there was a great deal of comment on the attacks on Lyttelton and Fielding and the eighty-year-old Colley Cibber, who were made the butts of the author's satire. The interpolated 'Memoirs of a Lady of Quality' was a subject of discussion everywhere and by every one, and was the immediate cause of the demand for the book.

The Lady Vane of the 'Memoirs' was, at the time of the publication of 'Peregrine Pickle', already a person of very considerable notoriety. Her father was Francis Hawes, of Purley Hall, Reading, who held the lucrative post of Cashier of the Customs. In 1715, when the Prince of Wales consented to be nominated as Governor of the South Sea Company, Hawes was elected a Director of that Corporation. An

Order in Council, made in January 1720, after the 'bubble' had burst, deprived all South Sea Directors of their places. Later in the month, he, with other of his colleagues, was ordered into the custody of Black Rod. He was charged with fraud, and his estate, valued at £40,000, was forfeited. His daughter, Frances Anne, who was born in 1713, was a very beautiful but dowerless girl. When she was seventeen she married the almost equally impecunious Lord William Hamilton, a son of the fourth Duke of Hamilton, and seems to have lived very happily with him until his death in 1734. She did not, however, mourn him long, for within a year of his decease she became the wife of William, second Viscount Vane, who was one year older than herself. He was devoted to her, but she would appear to have taken a violent dislike to him and only to have married him under pressure from her family. Anyway, in January 1737, Lord Vane, to the general amusement, was advertising for her, stating that she had eloped from him and gone into concealment. She was described by him as 'tall, well-shaped, with light-brown hair, fair complexion, her upper teeth somewhat irregular, her dress a red damask French sacque'.

It is not surprising that Lady Vane ran away, if her description in the 'Memoirs' of her husband is not entirely malicious:

'When he was lifted out of the chariot he exhibited a very ludicrous figure to the view. He was a thin, meagre, shivery creature, of a low stature, with little black eyes, a long nose, sallow complexion, and pitted with the small-pox; dressed in a coat of light brown frieze, lined with pearl-coloured shag, a monstrous solitaire, and bag, and (if I remember right) a pair of huge jackboots. In a word, his whole appearance

was so little calculated for inspiring love, that I had (on the strength of seeing him once before at Oxford) set him down as the last man on earth whom I should choose to wed; and I will venture to affirm that he was in every particular the reverse of my late husband.'

Lady Vane's extravagance knew no bounds; she entertained lavishly; she gambled recklessly; and seriously impaired the resources of her wealthy husband. Her innumerable affairs of gallantry were matters of common knowledge, but her doting husband condoned even her most flagrant moral outrages. In 1768 she became a chronic invalid, and did not leave her room during the last twenty years of her life.[1] An anecdote concerning Lady Vane was related to Dr. Robert Chambers by the Rev. John Anderson, Minister of Newburgh, nephew of the Rev. Thomas Stuart, which may well be given here:

'About 1775, a young divinity student, named Thomas Stuart, while attending the Edinburgh University, was selected by Principal Robertson to go and take charge of the education of a boy named Hawes, who lived with his mother in a villa near Bath. It was set forth to him, that, besides a handsome salary he might, in the event of giving satisfaction, hope for promotion in the English Church, as the lady had influence with the Earl of Bute. He was pleased with the situation, and only remarked with some surprise that of Mrs. Hawes's many visitors few were ladies. At length, as they were one day passing along a public walk in Bath, the young tutor heard the crowd repeating the name of Lady Vane, mingled with ex-

[1] Lady Vane is often confused with her distant connection, Anne Vane (1705–1736), to whom Dr. Johnson referred in 'The Vanity of Human Wishes':

'Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring.'

pressions of reprobation, and the truth instantly flashed upon him. He had inadvertently gone into the service of the lady of quality whose memoirs had been published upwards of twenty years before by Smollett. He wrote to Principal Robertson, to explain the necessity he was under of resigning his post. When he communicated his resolution to the lady, she changed colour, but did not upbraid him. Charles Fox was present, conversing gaily, on the evening when he departed from Lady Vane's house by a passing stage-coach. The lady at parting put a ring upon his finger, and whispered in his ear, "Had these wan cheeks been twenty years younger, your Scotch pride might have been vanquished".'

Lady Vane had always been very much in the public eye. 'Lady Vane is returned hither in company with Lord Berkeley, and went with him in public to Cranford, near Hounslow, where they remain as happy as love and youth can make them', Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote from London to Lady Pomfret in 1738. 'I am told that though she does not pique herself upon fidelity to any one man (which is but a narrow way of thinking), she boasts that she has always been true to her nation, and, notwithstanding foreign attacks, has always reserved her charms for the use of her own countrymen.' Her affair with Lord Berkeley lasted longer than most of the many similar episodes in her life, and in the course of it there was an incident that mightily amused Horace Walpole, who wrote in March 1741 to Sir Horace Mann:

'You cannot imagine what an entertaining fourth act of the opera we had the other night. Lord Vane, in the middle of the pit, making love to my lady. The Duke of Newcastle, his uncle, has lately given him three-score thousand pounds to cut off the entail of the

Newcastle estate. The fool immediately wrote to his wife to beg she would return to him from Lord Berkeley; that he had got so much and now they might live *comfortably*; but she will not live *comfortably*: she is at Lord Berkeley's house, whither go divers after her.'

Ten years later, just after the appearance of 'Peregrine Pickle', Walpole wrote again about her to the same correspondent:

'My Lady Vane has literally published the memoirs of her own life, only suppressing part of her lovers, no part of the success of the others with her: a degree of profligacy not to be accounted for; she does not want money, none of her lovers will raise her credit, and the number, all she had to brag of, concealed!'

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, interested in fiction, as befitted a cousin of Henry Fielding, who, as a lad had submitted to her the manuscript of his comedy, 'Love in Several Masks', a few years after 'Peregrine Pickle' was published, wrote to her daughter, the Countess of Bute:

'I began by your direction with "Peregrine Pickle". I think Lady Vane's "Memoirs" contain more truth and less malice than any I ever read in my life. When she speaks of her own being disinterested, I am apt to believe she really thinks so herself, as many highwaymen, after having no possibility of retrieving the character of honesty, please themselves with that of being generous, because, whatever they get on the road, they always spend at the next ale-house, and are still as beggarly as ever. Her history rightly considered, would be more instructive to young women than any sermon I know. They may see there what mortifications and variety of misery are the unavoidable consequences of gallantries. I think there is no rational

creature that would not prefer the life of the strictest Carmelite to the round of hurry and misfortune she has gone through. Her style is clear and concise, with some strokes of humour, which appear to me so much above her, I can't help being of opinion the whole has been modelled by the author of the book in which it is inserted, who is some subaltern admirer of hers. I may judge wrong, she being no acquaintance of mine, though she has married two of my relations. Her first wedding was attended with circumstances that made me think a visit not at all necessary, though I disobliged Lady Susan by neglecting it; and the second, which happened soon after, made her so near a neighbour, that I rather choose to stay the whole summer in town than partake of her balls and parties of pleasure, to which I did not think it proper to introduce you; and had no other way of avoiding it, without incurring the censure of a most unnatural mother for denying you diversions that the pious Lady Ferrers permitted to her exemplary daughters. Mr. Shirley has had uncommon fortune in making the conquest of two such extraordinary ladies, equal in their heroic contempt of shame, and eminent above their sex, the one for beauty, and the other for wealth, both which attract the pursuit of all mankind, and have been thrown into his arms with the same unlimited fondness. He appeared to me gentle, well-bred, well-shaped and sensible; but the charms of his face and eyes, which Lady Vane describes with so much warmth, were, I confess, always invisible to me, and the artificial part of his character very glaring, which I think her story shows in a strong light.'

It appears strange that Lady Mary should have been ignorant in July or August 1755 (when she wrote the above passage) of the authorship of 'Roderick

Random ', for in January of that year she had evinced an interest in Smollett: ' I am sorry my friend Smollett loses his time in translations; he has certainly a talent for invention, though I think it flags a little in his last work. " Don Quixote " is a difficult undertaking: I shall never desire to read any attempt to redress him. Though I am a piddler in the Spanish language, I had rather take pains to understand him in the original than sleep over a stupid translation.'

Lady Mary, however, was sure that she had detected Fielding's hand in ' Roderick Random ':

' H. Fielding has given a true picture of himself and his first wife, in the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Booth, some compliments to his own figure excepted, and I am persuaded, several of the incidents he mentions are real matters of fact. I wonder he does not perceive Tom Jones and Mr. Booth are sorry scoundrels. All these sort of books have the same fault, which I cannot easily pardon, being very mischievous. They place a merit in extravagant passions, and encourage young people to hope for impossible events, to draw them out of the misery they chose to plunge themselves into, expecting legacies from unknown relations, and generous benefactors to distressed virtue, as much out of nature as fairy treasures. Fielding has really a fund of true humour, and was to be pitied at his first entrance into the world, having no choice, as he said himself, but to be a hackney writer, or a hackney coachman. His genius deserved a better fate, but I cannot help blaming that continued indiscretion, to give it the softest name, that has run through his life, and I am afraid still remains. I guessed " Random " to be his, though without his name. I cannot think " Ferdinand Count Fathom " wrote by the same hand, it is every way so much below it.'

The middle of the eighteenth century was the age of pamphlets. When any one had anything to say to the public, he or she rushed into print, and brought out a brochure, purchasable at sixpence or a shilling. Lady Vane was too good a subject to be missed, and in 1751 at least four persons delivered themselves of their views. There were the 'Parallel between the Character of Lady Frail and the Lady of Quality in "Peregrine Pickle": In which the facts alleged in both are stated and compared, the character of the heroine set out in a true light, the several other characters examined', etc.; 'An Apology for the Conduct of A Lady of Quality, lately traduc'd under the name of Lady Frail. Wherein her case is fairly stated; the injurious accusations and reflections that have been cast upon her fully confuted; and some particular anecdotes of the life exhibited, that were never before made publick. In a letter from a Person of Honour to a Nobleman of Distinction'; 'The History of a Woman of Quality, or, The Adventures of Lady Frail. By an Impartial Hand'; and 'A Letter to the Honourable the Lady V——ss Vane. Occasioned by the publication of the Memoirs in the "Adventures of Peregrine Pickle".' These works are to-day totally unreadable, but they are of interest as indicating the sensation that 'Peregrine Pickle' created.

How it came about that Smollett inserted in 'Peregrine Pickle' 'The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality' must always remain a matter of conjecture, as it must always be doubtful why Lady Vane desired to publish her shame in this scandalous manner, for there is no reason to believe that the novelist had even the slightest acquaintance with the 'Lady of Quality'. If, however, as is said, Lady Vane in the composition of the 'Memoirs' was assisted by Dr. John

Shebbeare, that very pedestrian political writer, then, as Smollett knew Shebbeare, perhaps the mystery is explained. On the other hand, it has been stated, though on no sound authority, that Smollett himself revised the manuscript. It is generally accepted that Smollett received a sum of money for printing in the novel.

The lengthy 'Memoirs' have usually been condemned as an interruption to the general scheme of 'Peregrine Pickle'; but, firstly, there is no general scheme in that book with which it could interfere; and, secondly, it is at least a matter for argument that the 'Memoirs' present a portrait of a female Peregrine Pickle. The question of the taste of providing a medium for a woman so to expose herself is another matter. All that Lady Vane pronounced herself to be, Peregrine himself was. He is even more of a cad than Roderick Random, which even the most imaginative readers of the earlier story could scarcely have expected. His adventures are invariably discreditable to him. His amorous pursuit of Mrs. Horreck is bad enough, but perhaps she was fair game; but there is no excuse for his conduct towards the French wife; and as for this attempt to seduce Emelia Gauntlet in preference to marrying her, there is just nothing that can be said which is strong enough to stigmatise his character. After this his foisting on county society a drab from the streets seems merely an agreeable pleasantry.

The argument already put forward as to the author's motive in writing 'Roderick Random' applies equally to 'Peregrine Pickle'. Smollett was a stern moralist. If he made Peregrine think that all was right and proper in the episode of the French lady, this was certainly not the author's opinion, for read his view of such conduct, as written down in his 'Travels through France and Italy':

'If a Frenchman is admitted into your family, and distinguished by repeated marks of your friendship and regard, the first return he makes for your civilities is to make love to your wife, if she is handsome; if not to your sister, or daughter, or niece. If he suffers a repulse from your wife, or attempts in vain to debauch your sister, or your daughter, or your niece, he will, rather than not play the traitor with his gallantry, make his addresses to your grandmother; and ten to one but in one shape or another he will find means to ruin the peace of a family in which he has been so kindly entertained. What he cannot accomplish by dint of compliment and personal attendance, he will endeavour to effect by reinforcing these with billets-doux, songs, and verses, of which he always makes a provision for such purposes. If he is detected in these efforts of treachery, and reproached with his ingratitude, he impudently declares that what he had done was no more than simple gallantry considered in France as an indispensable duty on every man who pretended to good breeding. Nay, he will even affirm that his endeavours to corrupt your wife or deflower your daughter, were the most genuine proofs he could give of his particular regard for your family.'

The innumerable practical jokes in 'Peregrine Pickle' do not make any appeal to the modern reader, but the humour of the book taken as a whole is beyond question. The burlesque scenes at Paris in which the Painter and Physician figure made most amusing reading, and the book must live if only for that wondrous 'garrison', in which dwell Hawser Trunnion, Hatchway, and Pipes. Here is Smollett at the height of his character-drawing, at his very best.

In 'Peregrine Pickle' there is one scene that is immortal—there is probably nothing better in English literature than the dying scene of Commodore Trunnion. Smollett in his books was usually lacking in pathos, but there is pathos, mingled with humour, in the highest degree:

'About four o'clock in the morning our hero arrived at the garrison, where he found his generous uncle in extremity, supported in bed by Julia on one side, and Lieutenant Hatchway on the other, while Mr. Jolter administered spiritual consolation to his soul; and between whiles comforted Mrs. Trunnion who, with her maid, sat by the fire, weeping with great decorum; the physician having just taken his last fee, and retired, after pronouncing the fatal prognostic, in which he anxiously wished he might be mistaken.

'Though the Commodore's speech was interrupted by a violent hiccup, he still retained the use of his senses; and, when Peregrine approached, stretched out his hand with manifest signs of satisfaction. The young gentleman whose heart overflowed with gratitude and affection, could not behold such a spectacle unmoved. He endeavoured to conceal his tenderness, which, in the wildness of his youth, and the pride of his disposition, he considered as a derogation from his manhood; but, in spite of all his endeavours, the tears gushed from his eyes, while he kissed the old man's hand; and he was so utterly disconcerted by his grief, that, when he attempted to speak, his tongue denied its office;—so that the Commodore, perceiving his disorder, made a last effort of strength, and consoled him with these words:—

'"Swab the spray from your bowsprit, my good lad, and coil up your spirits. You must not let the

toplifts of your heart give away, because you see me ready to go down at these years. Many a better man has foundered before he has made half my way; tho' I trust, by the mercy of God, I shall be sure in port in a very few glasses, and fast moored in a most blessed riding; for my good friend Jolter hath overhauled the journal of my sins, and, by the observation he hath taken of the state of my soul, I hope I shall happily conclude my voyage, and be brought up in the latitude of heaven. Here has been a doctor that wanted to stow me chock full of physic; but, when a man's hour is come what signifies his taking his departure with a 'pothecary's shop in his hold. Those fellows come alongside of dying men, like the messengers of the Admiralty with sailing orders; but I told him as how I could slip my cable without his direction or assistance, and so he hauled off in dudgeon. This cursed hiccup makes such a rippling in the current of my speech, that mayhap you don't understand what I say. Now, while the sucker of my wind-pump will go, I would willingly mention a few things, which I hope you will set down in the log-book of your remembrance, when I am stiff, d'ye see. There's your aunt sitting whimpering by the fire, I desire you will keep her tight, warm, and easy in her old age, she's an honest heart in her own way, and thof she goes a little crank and humoursome, by being often overstowed with Nantz and religion, she has been a faithful shipmate to me, and I dare say never turned with another man since we embarked in the same bottom. Jack Hatchway, you know the trim of her as well as e'er a man in England, and I believe she has a kindness for you; whereby if you will grapple in the way of matrimony, when I am gone, I do suppose that my godson, for love of me, will allow you to live in the garrison all the days of your life."

'Peregrine assured him, he would with pleasure comply with any request he should make in behalf of two persons whom he esteemed so much. The lieutenant, with a waggish sneer, which even the gravity of the situation could not prevent, thanked them both for their good-will, telling the Commodore, he was obliged to him for his friendship, in seeking to promote him to the command of a vessel which he himself had wore out in the service; but that notwithstanding, he should be content to take charge of her, though he could not help being shy of coming after such an able navigator.

'Trunnion, exhausted as he was, smiled at this sally, and, after some pause, resumed his admonitions in this manner:—"I need not talk of Pipes, because I know you'll do for him without recommendation; the fellow has sailed with me in many a hard gale, and I'll warrant him as stout a seaman as ever set face to the weather. But I hope you'll take care of the rest of my crew, and not disrate them after I am dead in favour of new followers. As for that young woman, Ned Gauntlet's daughter, I'm informed as how she's an excellent wench, and has a respect for you; whereby if you run her on board in an unlawful way, I leave my curse upon you, and trust you will never prosper in the voyage of life. But I believe you are more of an honest man, than to behave so much like a pirate. I beg of all love you will take care of your constitution, and beware of running foul of harlots, who are no better than so many mermaids, that sit upon rocks in the sea, and hang out a fair face for the destruction of passengers; thof I must say, for my own part, I never met with any of those sweet singers, and yet I have gone to sea for the space of thirty years. But howsomever, steer your course clear of all such brimstone b——es. Shun going to law, as you would shun the

devil; and look upon all attorneys as devouring sharks, or ravenous fish of prey. As soon as the breath is out of my body, let minute guns be fired, till I am safe under ground. I would also be buried in the red jacket I had on when I boarded and took the 'Renummy.' Let my pistols, cutlass, and pocket-compass be laid in the coffin along with me. Let me be carried to the grave by my own men, rigged in the black caps and white shirts which my barge's crew were wont to wear, and they must keep a good look-out, that none of your pilfering rascallions may come and heave me up again for the lucre of what they can get, until the carcass is belayed by a tombstone. As for the motto, or what you call it, I leave that to you and Mr. Jolter, who are scholars; but I do desire, that it may not be engraved in the Greek or Latin lingos, and much less in the French, which I abominate, but in plain English, that, when the angel comes to pipe all hands, at the great day, he may know that I am a British man, and speak to me in my mother tongue. And now I have no more to say, but God in heaven have mercy upon my soul, and send you all fair weather, wheresoever you are bound."

'So saying, he regarded every individual around him with a look of complacency, and closing his eye, composed himself to rest, while the whole audience, Pipes himself not excepted, were melted with sorrow; and Mrs. Trunnion consented to quit the room, that she might not be exposed to the unspeakable anguish of seeing him expire.

'His last moments, however, were not so near as they imagined. He began to doze, and enjoyed small intervals of ease, till next day in the afternoon; during which remissions, he was heard to pour forth many pious ejaculations, expressing his hope, that, for all the heavy cargo of his sins, he should be able to

surmount the puttock-shrouds of despair, and get aloft to the cross-trees of God's good favour. At last his voice sank so low as not to be distinguished; and, having lain about an hour, almost without any perceptible signs of life, he gave up the ghost with a groan, which announced his decease.'

As a sequel the epitaph prepared for the old sailor by Hatchway may be given :

THE COMMODORE'S EPITAPH

Here lies
Foundered in a fathom and half
The shell
Of
HAWSER TRUNNION, ESQ.
Formerly commander of a squadron
In his Majesty's service
Who broached to, at five P.M. Oct. X
In the year of his age
Threescore and nineteen.

He kept his guns always loaded,
And his tackle ready manned,
And never showed his poop to the enemy,
Except when he took her in tow;
But
His shot being expended,
His match burnt out,
And his upper works decayed,
He was sunk
By Death's superior weight of metal.
Nevertheless,
He will be weighed again
At the Great Day,
His rigging refitted,
And his timbers repaired,
And, with one broadside,
Make his adversary
Strike in his turn.

There is an interesting note by Mr. H. C. Archer on the 'original' of Trunnion, and it may well be that Admiral Hoare may have suggested the Commodore to the novelist: 'About three miles on the Cheshire side of Warrington—in a part of the parish of Appleton called Hull, and on the estate of Mr. Thomas Lyon of Appleton Hall—stands a superior farmhouse, by name Bellefields, which has had two remarkable inhabitants.

'Bellefields was built somewhere about 1750 by a retired naval officer, an Admiral Hoare, who was attracted to this part of the country by his friendship with Sir Piers Warburton, Bt. The Admiral is said to be the original of Smollett's humorous and immortal picture of Commodore Hawser Trunnion in "Peregrine Pickle". The Admiral was his own architect, and took a ship for his model. He made cabins and officers' and warrant-officers' rooms. The grass plot before the house was his quarter-deck, where his flag floated from a masthead. All who approached him when he was on this supposed naval ground were required to do it with their hats off, and every other mark of duty, and official usage which an admiral has a right to expect on board his own ship. The twenty-four hours were divided into watches, and marked by bells; the occurrences of the day were recorded in a log-book; and the inmates of Bellefield slept in hammocks. But despite his professionable foibles, no warmer-hearted, kinder, or more hospitable gentleman than the real Commodore Trunnion ever existed.'

So little power of invention had Smollett that he went, more or less, over the ground he had travelled in his first novel. The differences are superficial. Roderick Random comes of a poor Scotch county family, and the narrative is written as autobiography; Peregrine Pickle is of a well-to-do English merchant

family, and his story is told biographically. In the first novel, the grandfather is cruel; in the second, the father and mother are cruel—inhumanly so. Pipes is to Peregrine as Strap to Roderick. Narcissa and Emelia in the one, are in the other Emilia and Sophia. Both heroes have their amorous adventures—and, in fact, seek little else beyond *bonnes fortunes* here, there, and everywhere.

It has commonly been stated that a second edition of 'Peregrine Pickle' appeared in the same year as, or the next year after, the original production. All those who have written on Smollett have asserted this, except James Hannay who, in his article in the *Quarterly Review*, gave the date as 1757. The error was disclosed, practically simultaneously late in 1925, by the editor of the edition of Smollett's work (Basil Blackwell, Oxford) and Dr. Buck in his 'Study of Smollett' (York University Press). The proof is definite, for there is a note in the *London Chronicle* for February 14-16, 1758: 'Next week will be published, in four volumes twelves, the second edition, revised, corrected, and altered by the author, "The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle", in which are included, "Memoirs of a Lady of Quality".' On the title page there is printed: 'The second edition, revised, corrected, and altered by the author. London: Printed for R. Baldwin and J. Richardson, in Paternoster Row; and D. Wilson and T. Durham, in the Strand. MDCCLVIII.'

In the second edition Smollett inserted 'Two letters, relating to the "Memoirs of a Lady of Quality", sent to the Editor by a Person of Honour', and he published an apologia in the form of an 'Advertisement':

'At length "Peregrine Pickle" makes his appearance in a new edition, in spite of all the art and industry

that were used to stifle him in the birth, by certain booksellers and others, who were at uncommon pains to mispresent the work and calumniate the author.

'The performance was decried as an immoral piece, and a scurrilous libel; the author was charged with having defamed the characters of particular persons, to whom he lay under considerable obligations; and some formidable critics declared, that the book was void of humour, character and sentiment.

'These charges, had they been supported by proof, would have certainly damned the writer and all his works; and even, unsupported as they were, had an unfavourable effect with the public. But, luckily for him, his real character was not unknown; and some readers were determined to judge for themselves, rather than trust implicitly to the allegations of his enemies. The book was found not altogether unworthy of their recommendation; a very large impression has been sold in England; another was bought up in a neighbouring kingdom;[1] the work has been translated into the French language;[2] and the demand for the original lately increased in England. It was the author's duty, therefore, as well as his interest, to oblige the public with this edition, which he has endeavoured to render less unworthy of their acceptance, by retrenching the superfluities of the first, reforming its manners, and correcting its expression. Divers uninteresting incidents are wholly suppressed. Some humorous scenes he has endeavoured to heighten, and he flatters himself that he has expunged every adventure, phrase, and insinuation, that could be construed by the most delicate reader into a trespass upon the rules of decorum.

[1] There was a pirated Irish edition in three volumes, 1751.

[2] 'Histoire et Aventures de Sir William Pickle,' Amsterdam, 1753.

'He owns, with contrition, that, in two instances, he gave way too much to the suggestions of personal resentment, and represented characters as they appeared to him at that time, through the exaggerating medium of prejudice. But he has in this impression endeavoured to make atonement for these extravagancies. Howsoever he may have erred in point of judgment or discretion, he defies the whole world to prove that he was ever guilty of one act of malice, ingratitude or dishonour. This declaration he may be permitted to make, without incurring the imputation of vanity or presumption, considering the numerous shafts of envy, rancour, and revenge, that have lately, both in private and in public, been levelled at his reputation.'

The attacks to which Smollett referred in the last paragraph of the 'Advertisement' were those made on George Lyttelton and Fielding. Lyttelton he had described as—

'The famous Gosling Scrag, Esq., son and heir of Sir Marmaduke Scrag, who seats himself in the chair of judgment, and gives sentence upon the authors of the age. I should be glad to know upon what pretensions to genius this predominance is founded? Do a few flimsy odes, barren epistles, pointless epigrams, and the superstitious suggestions of a half-witted enthusiast, entitle him to that eminent rank he maintains in the world of letters? or did he acquire the reputation of a wit, by a repetition of trite invectives against a minister, conveyed in a theatrical cadence, accompanied with the most ridiculous gestures, before he believed it was his interest to desert his master, and renounce his party? For my own part, I never perused any of his performances, I never saw him open his mouth in public, I never heard him speak

in private conversation, without recollecting and applying these two lines of Pope's " Dunciad "—

> Dulness, delighted, eyed the lively dunce,
> Remembering she herself was pertness once.

Further, in the first edition of ' Peregrine Pickle ', Smollett advised a young author that a quick passage to a competence could be made by an appeal to the vanity of Gosling Scrag:

' I advise Mr. Spondy to give him the refusal of this same pastoral; who knows but that he may have the good fortune of being listed in the number of the beefeaters, in which case he may, in process of time, be provided for in the Customs or the Church; when he is inclined to marry his own cook-wench, his gracious patron may condescend to give the birds away; and may finally settle him, in his old age, as a trading Westminster Justice.'

As Henry Fielding was appointed Justice of the Peace for Westminster in 1748, and Chairman of Quarter Sessions at Hick's Hall in the following year, there could be no doubt as to the reference.

Why should Smollett have fallen foul of his brother-novelist? Professor William Cross, in his learned biography of Fielding, remarks: ' Smollett could not free himself from the delusion that Fielding was a rival who owed his success to the patronage of friends. He was obsessed with the notion that Fielding had stolen several of his characters from " Roderick Random ". Partridge, he believed, was copied from Strap, and Miss Matthews from Miss Williams. God save the mark ! '

' God save the mark! ' by all means. Yet, as Professor Cross gives no authority for his statement, not too much reliance need be placed on it. There is no evidence that the novelists ever met, and so there can

have been no personal enmity between them. Besides, Smollett, whatever his faults, was not a jealous man. If he disliked Fielding because of the latter's popularity, why should he have been on good terms with Samuel Richardson, whose public was at least as great, if not, indeed, greater than that of Fielding? It may be, and indeed it is most probable, that Fielding's crime was in being an intimate of Lyttelton, who had befriended him, and to whom he had dedicated 'Tom Jones'. 'From the name of my patron, indeed,' he wrote in the dedication, 'I hope my reader will be convinced at his very entrance on this work, that he will find in the whole course of it nothing prejudicial to the cause of religion and virtue; and nothing inconsistent with the strictest rules of decency, nor which can offend the chastest eye on the perusal.'

The conflict between these two great novelists did not end here. More amazing than the apparently gratuitous insult to Fielding in 'Peregrine Pickle' is the fact that Smollett returned to the attack in 1752 in a pamphlet, in which Lyttelton again is Scrag and Fielding is introduced as Hilding: 'A Faithful Narrative of the Base and Inhuman Arts that were lately practised upon the Brain of Habbakkuk Hilding, Justice, Dealer, and Chapman, Who now lies in his House in Covent Garden in a deplorable State of Lunacy, a dreadful Monument to False Friendship and Delusion. By Drawcansir Alexander, Fencing-master and Philomath.—*tribus Anticyris caput insanabile.* I wage not war with *Bedlam* and the *Mint.*' The only possible explanation is that the sensitive Smollett took umbrage at a passage in Fielding's bi-weekly paper, the *Covent Garden Journal*:

'A little before our march, however, we sent a large body of forces, under the command of A. Miller,

to take possession of the most eminent printing-houses. . . . A small body, indeed, under the command of one Peeragrin Puckle made a slight show of resistance; but his hopes were soon found to be in vain: and at the first report of the approach of a younger brother of General Thomas Jones, his whole body immediately disappeared, and totally overthrew some of their own friends, who were marching to their assistance under the command of one Rodorick Random. This Rodorick, in a former skirmish with the people called critics, had owed some slight show of success more to the weakness of the critics than to any merit of his own.'

Of this extraordinary sixpenny production (printed for J. Sharp, near Temple Bar) it is impossible to give any account, except to say that it reads like malice run mad. It is almost incredible that Smollett wrote it, yet apparently it did come from his pen. There is nothing to show that he ever acknowledged the authorship of the pamphlet; but this was assumed at the time, and presently Charles Churchill alluded to the fact when replying to an attack in the *Critical Review* on ' The Rosciad ':

> Drawkansir-like, he deals destruction round.

One extract from this extraordinary work—the concluding paragraphs shall be given as a specimen:

' This being a fair and impartial account of the whole transaction, I leave the world to judge whether I have been to blame in my conduct towards the said *Hilding*, which was purely the result of humanity and compassion; or whether the wrath of God and man will not, in all probability, pursue the infamous authors of his mishap, who not contented with the misery they have already entailed upon him, have trumped

up a false and scandalous account of certain victories which they pretend he obtained in the above narrated expedition; tho' they took care to consult their own safety, by keeping themselves without the reach of that tumult in which they had involved their innocent friend. But, doubtless, their design is to impose upon that vain lunatic, with feigned reports of his own prowess, that he may be incited to take the field again, and become subservient to their sordid and unchristian views of interest and revenge.

'That the Father of Mercy would take pity on his deplorable condition, and deliver him, and all of us, from their perfidious acts, is the fervent prayer of his unfeigned wellwisher.

'DRAWCANSIR ALEXANDER,
'Fencing-Master and Philomath.'

Smollett's pamphlet caused much amusement, and there appeared a burlesque in the *Covent Garden Journal Extraordinary*, as by 'Sir Alexander Drawcansir, Knt., Censor of Great Britain':

'ADVERTISEMENT.

'Whereas I, Sir *Alexander Drawcansir*, of *Covent Garden*, Knight, have been of late most rancorously slandered in a virulent Pamphlet, entituled, *A Narrative of the base and inhuman Arts practised upon the Brain of* Habbakkuk Hilding, *Justice*, *Dealer*, *and Chapman*, etc., whereby I am likely to suffer greatly both in my character and occupation; in order to vindicate myself from scandalous aspersions contained in the said pamphlet, and at the same time to confute the author of such an infamous libel, I hereby promise the reward of five pounds, to any person or persons,

who shall prove that I was ever seen disturbing the peace of his Majesty on ass-back; or known to blow a trumpet, horn, or any other wind instrument, as herald to any beast, or collection of wild beasts; or even to distribute printed bills, or invite passengers at the door of any house, barn or booth, in which such spectacles were exhibited—excepting, nevertheless, from this my promise such transactions as I have been concerned in as an author, stroller and puppet-show man.

'Witness my hand,

'ALEXANDER DRAWCANSIR.'[1]

There is, and always has been, the inevitable comparison between Fielding and Smollett, and the *pas* is usually given to Fielding. Such critical estimates are ungracious, and often, on the whole, misleading—'There is surely room for both', as Thackeray once said when speaking about himself and Dickens. Fielding had written 'Joseph Andrews' (1742) when he was thirty-five, and 'Jonathan Wild' when he was thirty-six; he was forty-two when 'Tom Jones' (1749) appeared. When Smollett published 'Roderick Random' (1748) he was twenty-seven. On this Hazlitt comments: 'Smollett's first novel, "Roderick Random", which is also his best, appeared about the same time as Fielding's "Tom Jones", and yet it has a much more modern air with it; but this may be accounted for, from the circumstance that Smollett was quite a young man at the time, whereas Fielding's manner must have been formed long before. The style of "Roderick Random" is

[1] The only known copy of the *Covent Garden Journal Extraordinary* is in the Library of Yale University. The 'Advertisement' is reprinted in Professor Wilbur Cross's 'Life of Fielding'.

more easy and flowing than that of "Tom Jones"; the incidents follow one another more rapidly (though it must be confessed, they never come in such a throng, or are brought out with the same dramatic effect); the humour is broader, and as effectual; and there is nearly, if not quite, an equal interest excited by the story.' Then he adds: 'What then is it that gives the superiority to Fielding? It is the superior insight into the springs of human character, and the constant development of that character through every change of circumstance. Smollett's humour often arises from the situation of the persons, or the peculiarity of their external appearance; as, from Roderick Random's carrotty locks, which hung down over his shoulders like a pound of candles, or Strap's ignorance of London, and the blunders that follow from it. There is a tone of vulgarity about all his productions. The incidents frequently resemble detached anecdotes taken from a newspaper or magazine; and, like those in "Gil Blas", might happen to a hundred other characters. He exhibits the ridiculous accidents and reverses to which human life is liable, not "the stuff" of which it is composed. He seldom probes to the quick, or penetrates beyond the surface; and, therefore, he leaves no stings in the minds of his readers, and, in this respect, is far less interesting than Fielding. His novels always enliven, and never tire us: we take them up with pleasure, and lay them down without any strong feeling of regret. We look on and laugh, as spectators of a highly amusing scene, without closing in with the combatants, or being made parties in the event. We read "Roderick Random" as an entertaining story; for the particular accidents and modes of life which it describes have ceased to exist: but we regard "Tom Jones" as a real history; because the author never stops short of those essential

principles which lie at the bottom of all our actions, and in which we feel an immediate interest—*intus et in cute*. Smollett excels most as the lively caricaturist: Fielding as the exact painter and profound metaphysician.' But Hazlitt, though giving the preference to Fielding, does not underrate Smollett. He thinks that there is 'a rude conception of generosity' in some of Smollett's characters, while Fielding's amiable persons are merely good-natured. 'It is owing to this', he says, 'that Strap is superior to Partridge; as there is a heartiness and warmth of feeling in some of the scenes between Lieutenant Bowling and his nephew, which is beyond Fielding's power of impassioned writing.'

Thackeray, himself an admirer and follower of Fielding, fully appreciated Smollett, and paid tribute to him in his 'English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century': 'Uncle Bowling in "Roderick Random" is as good a character as Squire Western himself; and Mr. Morgan, the Welsh apothecary, is as pleasant as Dr. Caius. What man who has made his inestimable acquaintance—what novel reader who loves Don Quixote and Major Dalgetty—will refuse his most cordial acknowledgments to the admirable Lieutenant Lismahago?'

Perhaps, of all distinguished critics, Thomas Seccombe held the scales most evenly: 'Between Smollett and Fielding there are really more points of resemblance than contrast. Both are vigorous painters of real life, and both increased the resources of their art. Their broad, effective touches are in strong contrast, alike with Defoe's austere realism of incident and with Richardson's minute realism of character.'

Chapter VI

1753–1755

Endeavours to establish himself at Bath as a physician—'An Essay on the External Use of Water'—His account of Bath—He returns to London—Financial difficulties—He thrashes Peter Gordon—His letters to the Hon. Alexander Hume Campbell—His opinion of lawyers and Justices of the Peace—Mr. 'Paunceford'—'Ode to Independence'—'Ferdinand Count Fathom'—Correspondence—Edits an 'Universal History'—His histories of Germany, Italy, and France—Compiles a 'Compendium of Voyages'—His relations with publishers—His satirical comment on them—His translation of 'Don Quixote'.

SMOLLETT, with his wife and daughter, could not live long on the monies from 'Peregrine Pickle', and he made yet another effort to practise as surgeon or doctor. In June 1750 he obtained the degree of M.D. from Marischal College, Aberdeen; and thereafter he was particular to be called by his title.

It is characteristic that Smollett's only contribution to the literature of medical science should have been the result of a quarrel. Not content with his own disputatiousness, he was always eager to take part in any controversy that raged between others. When Smollett was at Bath, where he occasionally resided during the season in the hope that visiting invalids might call him in professionally, there was much argument between Cleland, a surgeon living there, and

some doctors as to a plan for remedying certain inconveniences of the baths. Smollett published in 1752 'An Essay on the External Use of Water, in a letter to Dr. ——, with particular remarks upon the present method of using the mineral waters at Bath, in Somersetshire, and a plan for rendering them more safe, agreeable, and efficacious'. Smollett's main contention was that the therapeutic properties of the waters had been vastly exaggerated. It is sufficient here to state that he, in many cases, preferred pure water, both for warm and cold bathing, though he did not deny that, in vapour bathing, the hot mineral springs may be used to more advantage than simple hot water.

If the description of the baths given in 'Humphry Clinker' is accurate, there was certainly much room for improvement. First, the invalid had to come from his lodgings: 'The poor, trembling valetudinarian is carried in a chair, between the heels of a double row of horses, wincing under the curry-combs of grooms and postillions, over and above the hazard of being obstructed or overturned by the carriages which are continually making their exits or entrances', Smollett wrote. 'I suppose after some chairmen have been maimed, and a few lives lost by these accidents, the corporation will think, in earnest about providing a more safe and commodious passage.' His account of the baths themselves is terrible: 'I have done with the Bath, therefore your advice comes a day too late. I grant that physic is no mystery of your making, I know it is a mystery of its own nature, and like other mysteries, requires a strong gulp of faith to make it go down. Two days ago I went into the King's Bath by the advice of our friend Charleton, in order to clear the strainer of the skin, for the benefit of a free perspiration; and the first object that saluted my eyes was a child, full of scrofulous ulcers, carried in the

arms of one of the guides, under the very noses of the bathers. I was so shocked at the sight that I retired immediately with indignation and disgust. Suppose the matter of these ulcers, floating in the water, comes in contact with my skin, when the pores are all open, I would ask you what must be the consequence? Good heavens! the very thought makes my blood run cold! We know not what sores may be running into the waters while we are bathing, and what sort of matter we may thus imbibe; the King's evil, the scurvy, and the cancer, and, no doubt, the heat will render the virus the more volatile and penetrating. To purify myself from all such contamination, I went to the Duke of Kingston's private bath, and there I was almost suffocated from want of free air, the place was so small, and the steam so stifling. After all, if the intention is no more than to wash the skin, I am convinced that simple element is more effectual than any water impregnated with salt and iron, which being astringent, will certainly contract the pores, and leave a kind of crust upon the surface of the body. But after a long conversation with the doctor about the construction of the pump and the cistern, it is very far from being clear to me, that the patients in the Pump Room don't swallow the scourings of the bathers. I can't help suspecting that there is, or may be, some regurgitation from the bath into the cistern of the pump. In that case, what a delicate beverage is every day quaffed by the drinkers, medicated with the sweat, dirt and dandruff and the abominable discharges of various kinds, from twenty different diseased bodies, parboiling in the kettle below. In order to avoid this filthy composition, I had recourse to the spring that supplies the private baths on the Abbey Green; but I at once perceived something extraordinary in the taste and smell, and upon inquiry, I find that the Roman

baths in this quarter were found covered by an old burying-ground belonging to the Abbey, through which in all probability the water drains in its passage; so that, as we drink the concoction of living bodies at the Pump Room, we swallow the strainings of rotten bones and carcases at the private bath. I vow to God the very idea turns my stomach. . . . Determined as I am against any further use of the Bath waters, this consideration would give me little disturbance, if I could find anything more pure, or less pernicious, to quench my thirst. But although the natural springs of excellent water are seen gushing spontaneously on every side from the hills that surround us, the inhabitants in general make use of the well water, so impregnated with nitre, or alum, or some other villainous mineral, that is equally ungrateful to the taste and mischievous to the constitution. It must be owned, indeed, that here in Milsom-street, we have a precarious and scanty supply from the hill, which is collected in an open basin in the Circus, liable to be defiled with dead dogs, cats, rats, and every species of nastiness, which the rascally populace throw into it from mere wantonness and brutality.'

Then comes a scathing indictment of the visitors: 'Every upstart of fortune, harnessed in the trappings of the mode, presents himself at Bath, as in the very focus of observation. Clerks and factors from the East Indies, loaded with the spoil of plundered provinces; planters, negro-drivers, and hucksters, from our American plantations, enriched they know not how; agents, commissioners and contractors, who have fattened in two successive wars on the blood of the nation; usurers, brokers, and jobbers of every kind; men of low birth and no breeding, have found themselves suddenly translated into a state of affluence, unknown to former ages: and no wonder that their

brains should be intoxicated with pride, vanity, and presumption. Knowing no other criterion of greatness, but the ostentation of wealth, they discharge their affluence, without taste or conduct, through every channel of the most absurd extravagance; and all of them hurry to Bath, because here, without any further qualification, they can mingle with the princes and nobles of the land. Even the wives and daughters of low tradesmen, who like shovel-nosed sharks, prey upon the blubber of those uncouth whales of fortune, are infected with the same rage of displaying their importance, and the slightest indisposition serves them with a pretext to insist upon being conveyed to Bath, where they may hobble country dances and cotillions among lordlings, squires, counsellors and clergy. These delicate creatures from Bedfordbury, Butcher Row, Crutched Friars, and Botolph Lane, cannot breathe in the gross air of the Lower Town, or conform to the vulgar rules of a common lodging house; the husband, therefore, must provide an entire house or elegant apartments in the new buildings. Such is the composition of what is called the fashionable company of Bath; where a very inconsiderable proportion of genteel people are lost in a mob of impudent plebeians who have neither understanding nor judgment, nor the least idea of propriety and decorum; and seem to enjoy nothing so much as an opportunity of insulting their betters.'

The medical work did not bring patients to Smollett's door, and soon after its publication he gave up all idea of practising. Probably he abandoned this profession with little of regret, for, though his most intimate friends were physicians or surgeons, he had a very poor idea of medical practitioners as a whole, and he was certainly at no pains to disguise his opinion of his professional brethren. Of the naval surgeons de-

picted in 'Roderick Random' something has been said in an earlier chapter. Of the doctors at Bath Smollett certainly had a poor opinion, if not of their ability, at least of their honesty. Peregrine Pickle plays a practical joke on some physicians of the watering-place, by summoning them to the bedside of an old officer, suffering from gout, who would not in any circumstances call in one of the fraternity:

'Having received this intelligence, they took possession of his ante-chamber, and shut the door, while the rest of the tribe posted themselves on the outside as they arrived; so that the whole passage was filled from the top of the staircase to the street door; and the people of the house, together with the Colonel's servant were struck dumb with astonishment. The three leaders of this learned gang had no sooner made their lodgment good, than they began to consult about the patient's malady, which every one of them pretended to have considered with great care and assiduity. The first who gave his opinion, said, the distemper was an obstinate arthritis; the second affirmed, that it was no other than a confirmed pox, and the third swore it was an inveterate scurvy. This diversity of opinions was supported by a variety of quotations from medical authors, ancient as well as modern; but these were not sufficient authority, or, at least, not explicit enough to decide the dispute; for there are many schisms in medicine, as well as in religion, and each sect can quote the fathers in support of the tenets they profess. In short, the contention rose to such a pitch of clamour, as not only alarmed the brethren on the stair, but also awaked the patient from the first nap he had enjoyed in the space of ten whole days. Had it been simply waking, he would have been obliged to them for the noise that disturbed him; for, in that case, he would

have been relieved from the tortures of hell fire, to which, in his dream, he fancied himself exposed. But this dreadful vision had been the result of the impression which had been made upon his brain by the intolerable anguish of his joints; so that, when he awaked, the pain, instead of being allayed, was rather aggravated by a great acuteness of sensation; and the confused vociferation in the next room invading his ears at the same time, he began to think his dream was realised, and, in the pangs of despair, applied himself to a bell, which he rung with great violence and perseverance.

'This alarm put an immediate stop to the disputation of the three doctors, who, upon this notice of his being awake rushed into his chamber without ceremony; and two of them seizing his arms, the third made the like application of his temples. Before the patient could recollect himself from the amazement which had laid hold on him at this unexpected irruption, the room was filled by the rest of the faculty, who followed the servant that entered in obedience to his master's call; and the bed was in a moment surrounded by these gaunt ministers of death.'

Nor was Smollett more complimentary in 'Ferdinand Count Fathom', for he makes that hero affect to be a physician, for the following good and sufficient reasons:

'In his researches, he found that the great world was wholly engrossed by a few practitioners who had arrived at the summit of reputation, consequently were no longer obliged to cultivate those arts by which they rose; and that the rest of the business was parcelled out into small enclosures occupied by different groups of personages, male and female, who stood in rings,

and tossed the ball from one to another, there being in each department two sets, the individuals of which relieved one another occasionally. Every knot was composed of a waiting-woman, nurse, apothecary, surgeon, and physician, and sometimes a midwife was admitted into the party; and in this manner the farce was commonly performed.

'A fine lady, fatigued with idleness, complains of the vapours, is deprived of her rest, though not so sick as to have recourse to medicine. Her favourite maid, tired with giving her attendance in the night, thinks proper for the benefit of her own repose, to complain of a violent headache, and recommends to her mistress a nurse of approved tenderness and discretion; at whose house, in all likelihood, the said chambermaid hath oft given the rendezvous to a male friend. The nurse well skilled in the mysteries of her occupation, persuades the patient, that her malady, far from being slight or chimerical, may proceed to a very dangerous degree of the hysterical affection, unless it be nipt in the bud by some very effectual remedy. Then she recounts a surprising cure performed by a certain apothecary, and appeals to the testimony of the waiting-woman, who being the gossip of his wife, confirms the evidence, and corroborates the proposal. The apothecary being summoned, finds her ladyship in such a delicate situation, that he declines prescribing, and advises her to send for a physician without delay. The nomination, of course, falls to him, and the doctor being called declares the necessity of immediate venesection, which is accordingly performed by a surgeon of the association.'

At this time Smollett's affairs were in a bad way. In a letter to Richard Oswald, dated February 11, 1752, he described the difficulties under which he was

labouring owing to the non-arrival of expected remittances from the West Indies. A Mrs. Leaver, who would appear to have been his wife's mother, had not long since given, or lent, him two hundred pounds, and, he went on to say, he was determined not to ask more from her as she was ignorant and narrow-minded and might form judgements of him which might break up the peace of his family. Instead, he begged Oswald to advance him a hundred pounds to meet his most pressing liabilities.

Smollett was now a man of repute, and henceforth, even as years before all Scotsmen who came to London brought with them a letter of introduction to Andrew Mitchell, so, almost as a matter of course, they called on him at Chelsea. He was good-natured and open-handed, and would do anything he could to help those who came to him in distress: indeed, Dr. Moore says that he gave assistance 'even beyond what his circumstances could justify'. Once, at least, his benevolence was sadly abused. One of his countrymen, Peter Gordon, whom by timely loans he had saved from imprisonment and ruin, and had indeed actually supported for some years, induced him, so the case runs, 'to endorse notes in support of his credit', assuring the novelist that these would be met—then he discounted them, and threw himself into the Insolvency Court. Smollett might have put up even with this, but when he received a letter from Gordon defending his conduct, he felt that the time for action had come. He went to the swindler's lodgings and thrashed him soundly. An action for assault against him was brought—and lost. The matter, however, did not rest here. Gordon's counsel, the Hon. Alexander Hume Campbell, brother of the Earl of Marchmont, in his appeal to the jury exaggerated the castigation into an attempt to murder, and Smollett felt

that this was an abuse of privilege. As the novelist said in the letter, the barrister was inspired to abuse by passages about his profession in 'Ferdinand Count Fathom'. It was only by the utmost persuasion that Smollett was induced to refrain from assaulting Campbell. At last he was induced to content himself with writing a tremendous letter demanding an apology. In this matter he would appear to have taken the advice, or at least to have consulted a friend, Daniel Mackercher —the Mr. M—— of 'Peregrine Pickle'—whom he had more than once befriended, as the following note indicates:

Tobias Smollett to Daniel Mackercher

'Dear Sir, '*Monday morning.*

'I am much mortified that my rascally situation will not at present permit me to send more than the trifle enclosed, as nothing could give me more pleasure than an opportunity of showing my friendship and esteem.

'I am, dear Sir,

'Yours most faithfully,

'Ts. Smollett.'

Tobias Smollett to Daniel Mackercher, Esq.

'Dear Sir, 'Chelsea, *Friday, February* 23, 1753.

'I shall take it as a particular favour if you will peruse the enclosed draft of a letter which I intend to send to Mr. Hume Campbell, provided you think it contains nothing actionable. I hope you will excuse this trouble, and believe me to be with equal sincerity and attachment,

'Dear Sir,

'Your very humble Servant,

'Ts. Smollett.'

Tobias Smollett to the Hon. Alexander Hume Campbell

'CHELSEA, *February* 23, 1753.

'I have waited several days in hope of receiving from you an acknowledgment touching those harsh, unjustifiable, and, let me add, unmannerly expressions, which you have annexed to my name, in the Court of King's Bench, when you opened the cause depending between me and Peter Gordon. As I do not find you have discovered the least inclination to retract what you have said to my prejudice, I have taken this method to refresh your memory, and to demand such satisfaction as a gentleman injured as I am has a right to claim.

'The business of a counsellor is, I apprehend, to investigate the truth in behalf of his client; but surely he has no privilege to blacken and asperse the character of the other party, without any regard to veracity or decorum. That you assumed this unwarrantable privilege in commenting upon your brief, I believe you will not pretend to deny, when I remind you of those peculiar flowers of eloquence which you poured forth on that notable occasion.

'First of all, in order to inspire the Court with horror and contempt for the defendant, you gave the jury to understand, that you did not know this Dr. Smollett; and, indeed, his character appeared in such a light, from the facts contained in your brief, that you never should desire to know him. I should be glad to know of what consequence it could be to the cause whether you did or did not know the defendant, or whether you had or had not an inclination to be acquainted with him? Sir, this was a pitiful personality, calculated to depreciate the character of a gentleman to whom you was a stranger, merely to gratify the rancour of an

abandoned fellow who had feed you to speak in his cause. Did I ever seek your acquaintance, or court your protection? I had been informed, indeed, that you was a lawyer of some reputation, and, when the suit commenced would have retained you for that reason, had not I been anticipated by the plaintiff; but, far from coveting your acquaintance, I never dreamed of exchanging a word with you on that or any other subject: you might therefore have spared your invidious declaration until I had put it in your power to mortify me with a repulse, which, upon my honour, would never have been the case, were you a much greater man than you really are.

'Yet this was not the only expedient you used to prepossess the jury against me. You were hardy enough to represent me as a person void of all humanity and remorse; as a barbarous ruffian, who, in a cowardly manner, had, with two associates, as barbarous as myself, called a peaceable man out of his lodgings, and assaulted him in the dark, with intent to murder. Such an horrid imputation, publicly fixed upon a poor person whose innocence you could hardly fail to know, is an outrage, for which, I believe, I might find reparation from the law itself, notwithstanding the artful manner of qualifying the expression, by saying, *provided the facts can be proved.*

'This low subterfuge may, for aught I know, screen you from a prosecution at law, but can never acquit you in that court which every man of honour holds in his breast. I say you must have known my innocence, from the weakness of the evidence which you produced, and with which you either were, or ought to have been, previously acquainted, as well as from my general character and that of my antagonist, which it was your duty to have learned. I will venture to say, you did not know my character, and in heart believed

me incapable of such brutality as you laid to my charge. Surely I do not over-rate my importance, in affirming that I am not so obscure in life as to have escaped the notice of Mr. Hume Campbell: and I will be bold enough to challenge him and the whole world to prove one instance in which my integrity was called, or, at least, left in question. Have not I, therefore, reason to suppose that, in spite of your own internal conviction, you undertook the cause of a wretch, whose ingratitude, villany, and rancour, are, I firmly believe, without example in this kingdom; that you magnified a slight correction, bestowed by his benefactor in consequence of the most insolent provocation, into a deliberate and malicious scheme of assassination; and endeavoured, with all the virulence of defamation, to destroy the character, and even the life, of an injured person, who, as well as yourself, is a gentleman by birth, education, and profession?

'In favour of whom, and in consequence of what, was all this zeal manifested, all this slander exhausted, and all this scurrility discharged? Your client, whom you dignified with the title of Esquire, and endeavoured to raise to the same footing with me in point of station and character, you knew to be an abject miscreant, whom my compassion and humanity had lifted from the most deplorable scenes of distress; whom I had saved from imprisonment and ruin; whom I had clothed and fed for a series of years; whom I had occasionally assisted with my purse, credit and influence. You knew, or ought to have known, that, after having received a thousand marks of my benevolence, and prevailed upon me to endorse notes for the support of his credit, he withdrew himself into the verge of the court, and took up his habitation in a paltry alehouse, where he not only set me and the rest of his creditors at defiance, but provoked me, by

scurrilous and insolent letters and messages, to chastise him in such a manner as gave him a handle for this prosecution, in which you signalised yourself as his champion, for a very honourable consideration. There is something so palpably ungrateful, perfidious, and indeed diabolical, in the conduct of the prosecutor, that, even in these degenerate days, I wonder how he could find an attorney to appear in his behalf. *O tempora! O mores!*

'After having thus sounded the trumpet of obloquy in your preamble, and tortured every circumstance of the plaintiff's evidence to my detriment and dishonour, you attempted to subject me to the ridicule of the Court, by asking a question of my first witness, which had no more relation to the cause, than if you had desired to know the name of his grandmother. What title had you to ask of a tradesman, if he knew me to be an author? What affinity had this question with the circumstances of the assault? Was not this foreign to the purpose? Was it not impertinent, and proposed with a view to put me out of countenance, and to raise the laugh of the spectators at my expense? There, indeed, you was disappointed, as you frequently are, in those little digressive efforts by which you make yourself remarkable.

'Though I do not pretend to possess that superlative degree of effrontery by which some people make a figure at the bar, I have assurance enough to stand the mention of my works without blushing, especially when I despise the taste, and scorn the principles, of him who would turn them to my disgrace. You succeeded, however, in one particular; I mean, in raising the indignation of my witness; of which you took all imaginable advantage, puzzling, perplexing, and brow-beating him, with artifice, eagerness, and insult, as overwhelmed him with confusion, and

had well nigh deprived me of the benefit of his evidence.

'Luckily for me, the next gentleman who was called confirmed what the other had swore, and proved to the satisfaction of the judge and jury, and even to your own conviction, that this terrible deliberate assassination was no more than a simple blow given to a rascal, after repeated provocation, and that of the most flagrant kind; that no advantage was taken in point of weapons; and that two drabs, whom they had picked up for the purpose, had affirmed upon oath a downright falsehood, with a view to blast my reputation. You yourself was so conscious of this palpable detection, that you endeavoured to excuse them by a forced explanation, which, you may depend upon it, shall not screen them from a prosecution for perjury. I will not say that this was like patronising a couple of gypsies who had forsworn themselves, and consequently forfeited all title to the countenance, or indeed forbearance, of the Court; but this I will say, that your tenderness for them was of a piece with your whole behaviour to me, which I think was equally insolent and unjust; for, granting that you really supposed me guilty of an intended assassination before the trial began, you saw me in the course of evidence acquitted of that suspicion, and heard the judge insist upon my innocence in his charge to the jury, who brought in their verdict accordingly.

'Then, Sir, you ought in common justice to have owned yourself mistaken, or to have taken some other opportunity of expressing your concern for what you had said to my disadvantage; though even such an acknowledgment would not have been a sufficient reparation; because, before my witnesses were called, many persons left the Court with impressions to my prejudice, conceived from the calumnies which they

heard you espouse and encourage. On the whole, you opened the trial with such hyperbolical impetuosity, and conducted it with such particular bitterness and rancour, that everybody perceived you were more than ordinarily interested; and I could not divine the mysterious bond of union that attached you to Peter Gordon, Esq., until you furnished me with a key to the whole secret, by that strong emphasis with which you pronounced the words, " Ferdinand Count Fathom ". Then I discovered the source of your good-will towards me, which is no other than the history of a law-suit inserted in that performance, where the author takes occasion to observe, that the counsel behaved like men of consummate abilities in their profession; exerting themselves with equal industry, eloquence and erudition, in their endeavours to perplex the truth, browbeat the evidence, puzzle the judge, and mislead the jury. Did any part of this character come home to your own conscience? or did you resent it as a sarcasm levelled at the whole bench without distinction?

' I take it for granted, this must have been the origin of your enmity to me because I can recollect no other circumstance in my conduct, by which I could incur the displeasure of a man whom I scarce knew by sight, and with whom I never had the least dispute, or indeed concern. If this was the case, you pay a very scurvy compliment to your own integrity, by fathering a character which is not applicable to any honest man, and give the world to believe, that our Courts of Justice stand greatly in need of reformation.

' Indeed, the petulance, licence, and buffoonry of some lawyers, in the exercise of their function, is a reproach upon decency, and a scandal to the nation; and it is surprising, that the judge, who represents his Majesty's person, should suffer such insults upon the dignity of the place. But, whatever liberties of

this kind are granted to the counsel, no sort of freedom, it seems, must be allowed to the evidence, who, by the bye, are of much more consequence to the cause. You will take upon you to divert the audience at the expense of a witness, by impertinent allusions to some parts of his private character and affairs; but if he pretends to retort the joke, you insult, abuse, and bellow against him, as an impudent fellow, who fails in his respect to the Court.

'It was in this manner you behaved to my first witness, whom you first provoked into a passion by your injurious insinuations; then you took an advantage of the confusion which you had entailed upon him, and, lastly, you insulted him as a person who had shuffled in his evidence. This might have been an irreparable injury to the character of a tradesman, had not he been luckily known to the whole jury, and many other persons in Court, as a man of unquestioned probity and credit.

'Sir, a witness has as good a right as you have to the protection of the Court, and ought to have more; because evidence is absolutely necessary for the investigation of truth; whereas, the aim of the lawyer is often to involve it in doubt and obscurity. Is it for this purpose you so frequently deviate from the point, and endeavour to raise the mirth of the audience with flat jokes and insipid similes? or have you really so miserably mistaken your own talents, as to set up as man of humour?

'For my own part, were I disposed to be merry, I should never desire a more pregnant subject of ridicule than your own appearance and behaviour, but, as I am at present in a very serious mood, I shall content myself with demanding reparation for the injurious treatment I have received at your hands; otherwise I will, in four days, put this letter in the press, and you

shall hear, in another manner—not from a ruffian and an assassin—but from an injured gentleman, who is not ashamed of subscribing himself', etc.

The passage in 'Ferdinand Count Fathom' which apparently roused the ire of Hume Gordon may have been the following account of the barristers briefed for Fathom when on his trial for criminal conversation with Trapwell's wife—the one instance in this book in which on the whole he was more sinned against than sinning:

'His counsel behaved like men of consummate abilities in their profession; they exerted themselves with equal industry, eloquence, and erudition, in their endeavours to perplex the truth, browbeat the evidence, puzzle the judge, and mislead the jury; but the defendant found himself woefully disappointed in the deposition of Trapwell's journeyman, whom the solicitor pretended to have converted to his interest.'

Having tilted against doctors and lawyers, Smollett in the same book made a humorous attack on the unpaid magistracy in the chapter in which Fathom, on his arrival in England, is arrested as a suspicious person, and the justice addresses the smuggler, who hoping for a reward had been the cause of apprehending him:

'Friend, I know nothing of you or your titles; but this I know, if you have any information to give in, you come to my house when I am at home, and proceed in the lawful way, that is, d'ye mind, if you swear as how this here person is an outlaw; then, if so be as he has nothing to say to the contrary, my clerk shall make out a mittimus, and so jail with him till next 'size. "But, Sir," answered the impeacher, "this is a case

that admits of no delay. The person I have apprehended is a prisoner of consequence to the State." "How, fellor!" cried the magistrate, interrupting him, "is there any person of more consequence than one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace, who is besides a considerable member of the landed interest? D'ye know, Sirrah, who you are talking to? If you don't go about your business, I believe I shall lay you by the heels." The smuggler, fearing his prize would escape through the ignorance, pride, and obstinacy of this country Justice, approached his Worship, and in a whisper, which was overheard by all the company, assured him he had indubitable reason to believe the foreigner was no other than the Pretender's eldest son. At mention of this formidable name, every individual of the audience started, with signs of terror and amazement. The Justice dropped his pipe, recoiled upon his chair, and looking most ridiculously aghast, exclaimed, "Seize him, in the name of God, and his Majesty King George! Has he got no secret arms upon him!"

'Fathom being thus informed of the suspicion under which he stood, could not help smiling at the eagerness with which the spectators flew upon him, and suffered himself to be searched with great composure, well knowing they would find no moveables about his person, but such as upon examination would turn to his account; he, therefore, very calmly presented to the Magistrate his purse and a small box that contained his jewels, and in the French language desired they might be preserved from the hands of the mob. This request was interpreted by the accuser, who, at the same time, laid claim to the booty. The Justice took charge of the deposit, and, one of his neighbours having undertaken the office of clerk, he proceeded to the examination of the culprit, whose

papers were by this time laid on the table before him. "Stranger," said he, "you stand charged with being son of the Pretender to these realms, what have you to say in your own defence?" Our hero assured him, in the French language, that he was falsely impeached, and demanded justice on the accuser, who without the least reason, had made such a malicious attack upon the life and honour of an innocent gentleman.

'The smuggler, instead of acting the part of a faithful interpreter, told his Worship, that the prisoner's answer was no more than a simple denial, which every felon would make who had nothing else to plead in his own behalf, and that this alone was a strong presumption of his guilt, because, if he was not really the person they suspected him to be, the thing would speak for itself, for, if he was not the Young Pretender, who then was he? This argument had great weight with the Justice, who, assuming a very important aspect, observed, "Very true, friend, if you are not the Pretender, in the name of God, who are you? One may see with half an eye that he is no better than a promiscuous fellow."

'Ferdinand now began to repent of having pretended ignorance of the English language, as he found himself at the mercy of a rascal, who put a false gloss upon all his words and addressed himself to the audience, successively in French, High Dutch, Italian, and Hungarian Latin, desiring to know if any person present understood any of these tongues, that his answers might be honestly explained to the Bench. But he might have accosted them in Chinese with the same success: there was not one person present tolerably versed in his mother-tongue, much less acquainted with any foreign language, except the wine merchant, who, incensed at this appeal, which he

considered as an affront, gave the Judge to understand, that the delinquent, instead of speaking to the purpose, contumaciously insulted his authority in sundry foreign lingos, which he apprehended was an additional proof of his being the Chevalier's son, inasmuch as no person would take the pains to learn such a variety of gibberish, except with some sinister intent.

'This annotation was not lost upon the Squire, who was too jealous of the honour of his office to overlook such a flagrant instance of contempt. His eyes glistened, his cheeks were inflated with rage. "The case is plain," said he; "having nothing of signification to offer in his own favour, he grows refractory, and abuses the court in his base Roman Catholic jargon; but I'll let you know, for all you pretend to be a prince, you are no better than an outlawed vagrant, and I'll show you what a thing you are when you come in composition with an English Justice, like me, who have more than once extinguished myself in the service of my country. As nothing else accrues, your purse, black box, and papers shall be sealed up before witnesses and sent by express to one of his Majesty's Secretaries of State; and, as for yourself, I will apply to the military at Canterbury, for a guard to conduct you to London."'

Smollett was good to others in distress than Peter Gordon, and was treated with like ingratitude. Of Gordon no more is heard; probably he fell on even worse times, and Smollett dismissed him from his mind. But of a man whom he befriended in the days of his poverty, and who ignored him and the obligations to him when he became affluent, those who will may see him held up for all time to contempt as Paunceford in 'Humphry Clinker', in passages written after Smollett met him again at Bath:

'Yesterday, one Paunceford gave tea on particular invitation. This man, after having been long buffeted by adversity, went abroad; and fortune, resolved to make him amends for her former coyness, set him all at once up to the very ears in affluence. He has now emerged from obscurity, and blazes out in all the tinsel of the times. I don't find that he is charged with any practices that the law deems dishonest or that his wealth has made him arrogant or inaccessible; on the contrary, he takes great pains to appear affable and gracious. But, they say, he is remarkable for shrinking from his former friendships, which were generally too plain and homespun to appear amidst his present brilliant connexions; and that he seems uneasy at sight of some old benefactors, whom a man of honour would take pleasure to acknowledge. . . .

'Mr. Serle passed the evening with us at our lodgings; and appeared to be intelligent, and even entertaining, but his disposition was rather of a melancholy hue. My uncle says he is a man of uncommon parts and unquestioned probity; that his fortune, which was originally small, has been greatly hurt by a romantic spirit of generosity, which he has often displayed, even at the expense of his discretion, in favour of worthless individuals. That he had rescued Paunceford from the lowest distress, when he was bankrupt both in means and reputation. That he had espoused his interests with a degree of enthusiasm, broke with several friends, and even drawn his sword against my uncle, who had particular reasons for questioning the moral character of the said Paunceford. That without Serle's countenance and assistance, the other never could have embraced the opportunity, which had raised him to this pinnacle of wealth. That Paunceford, in the first transports of his success, had written, from abroad, letters to different corre-

spondents, owning his obligations to Mr. Serle, in the warmest terms of acknowledgment, and declaring he considered himself only as a factor for the occasions of his best friend. That, without doubt, he had made declarations of the same nature to his benefactor himself, though this last was always silent and reserved on the subject; but, for some years, those tropes and figures of rhetoric had been disused. That upon his return to England, he had been lavish in his caresses to Mr. Serle, invited him to his house, and pressed him to make it his own. That he had overwhelmed him with general professions, and affected to express the warmest regard for him, in company of their common acquaintance; so that everybody believed his gratitude was as liberal as his fortune; and some went so far as to congratulate Mr. Serle on both.

'All this time Paunceford carefully and artfully avoided particular discussions with his old patron, who had too much spirit to drop the most distant hint of balancing the account of obligation. That, nevertheless, a man of his feelings could not but resent this shocking return for all his kindness; and, therefore, he withdrew himself from the connexion, without coming to the least explanation, or speaking a syllable to any living soul; so that now their correspondence is reduced to a slight salute with the hat, when they chance to meet in any public place; an accident that rarely happens, for their walks lie different ways. Mr. Paunceford lives in a palace, feeds upon dainties, is arrayed in sumptuous apparel, appears in all the pomp of equipage, and passes his time among the nobles of the land. Serle lodges in Stall Street, up two pair of stairs backwards, walks afoot in a Bath rug, eats for twelve shillings a week, and drinks water as preservative against the gout and gravel.'

There is a further unquestionable reference to C——l in Smollett's posthumously published 'Ode to Independence':

> In Fortune's car behold that minion ride,
> With either India's glittering spoils opprest:
> So moves the sumpter-mule, in harness's pride,
> That bears the treasure which he cannot taste.
> For him let venal bards disgrace the bay,
> And hireling minstrels wake the tinkling string;
> Her sensual snares let faithless Pleasure lay,
> And all her jingling bells fantastic Folly ring;
> Disquiet, Doubt, and Dread shall intervene;
> And Nature, still to all her feelings just,
> In vengeance hang a damp on every scene,
> Shook from the baneful pinions of Disgust.

The truth of the Paunceford incident was vouched for by Archibald Hamilton, proprietor of the *Critical Review*, who told Alexander Chalmers: 'Paunceford was a John C——l, who was fed by Smollett when he had not bread to eat, nor clothes to cover him. He was taken out to India as private secretary to a celebrated Governor-General, and as essayist; and after only three years absence, returned with forty thousand pounds. From India he sent several letters to Smollett, professing that he was coming over to lay his fortune at the feet of his benefactor. But on his arrival he treated Smollett, Hamilton, and others, who had befriended him, with the most ungrateful contempt. The person who taught him the art of essaying became reduced in circumstances, and is now (1792) or lately was collector of the tolls on carts at Holborn Bars. C——l never paid him, or any person to whom he was indebted. He died in two or three years after at his house near Hounslow, universally despised. At the request of Smollett, Mr. Hamilton employed him to write in the *Critical*

Review, which, with Smollett's charity, was all his support, previously to his departure for India.'

Smollett's third novel, 'Ferdinand Count Fathom', was published in 1753, and though it appeared anonymously the author's name was Punchinello's secret. From the first there was a tendency to depreciate this book. 'We are reading "Count Fathom", a very indifferent affair, as far as we have gone: they say it mends in the second volume, and so it had need', thus Mrs. Delany wrote to Mrs. Dewes, in March 1753. Notwithstanding Mrs. Delany and many more highly qualified critics, there is certainly something to be said for the story—Hazlitt pronounced it 'admirable in its way'. It is 'its way' that perhaps has prejudiced people against it. 'The subject and characters in "Count Fathom" are, in general, exceedingly disgusting: the story is also spun out to a degree of tediousness in the serious and sentimental parts; but there is more power of writing occasionally shown in it than in any of his works. I need only refer to the fine and bitter irony of the Count's address to the country of his ancestors on his landing in England; to the robber scene in the forest, which has never been surpassed; to the Parisian swindler who personates a raw English country squire (Western is tame by comparison); and to the story of the seduction in the west of England. It would be difficult to point out, in any author, passages written with more force and mastery than these.'

Smollett takes as his 'hero' the most utter scoundrel that he could conceive, and tells the story of his shameful career with affected gusto. Fielding, of course, had done this magnificently in 'Jonathan Wild', and about a century later Thackeray was to do it at least as well in 'Barry Lyndon'; but then these

writers had a quality which Smollett did not possess; his weapon was the bludgeon, theirs the rapier. He could castigate with the best, but he could not destroy with irony.

'Let me not, therefore, be condemned for having chosen my principal character from the purlieus of treachery and fraud [Smollett wrote in the Preface], when I declare my purpose is to set him up as a beacon for the benefit of the unexperienced and unwary, who, from the perusal of these memoirs, may learn to avoid the manifold snares with which they are continually surrounded in the paths of life; while those who hesitate on the brink of iniquity may be terrified from plunging into that irremediable gulf, by surveying the deplorable fate of "Ferdinand Count Fathom".'

It may be urged that Fathom never had a chance: he was damned by his birth. His mother was a camp-follower. As for his father—'But, that he was acknowledged by no mortal sire, solely proceeded from the uncertainty of his mother, whose affections were so dissipated among a number of admirers, that she could never pitch upon the person from whose loins our hero sprang'. An Hungarian nobleman, Count de Melvil, is attracted to this lady, and offers her a home but not his hand; but she preferred the indulgence of her ultra-Bohemian habits; whereupon the Count took charge of Ferdinand. Starting as a domestic in attendance upon the Count's son, he soon became a favourite with all.

'Fathom might possibly have fallen under his [the son's] displeasure or contempt, had not that

pliant genius found means to retain his friendship by seasonable compliances and submission; for the sole study, or, at least, the chief aim of Ferdinand was to make himself necessary and agreeable to those on whom his dependence was placed. His talent was in this particular suited to his inclination; he seemed to have inherited it from his mother's womb; and, without all doubt, would have raised upon it a most admirable superstructure of fortune and applause, had not it been inseparably yoked with a most insidious principle of self-love, that grew up with him from the cradle, and left no room in his heart for the least particle of social virtue. This last, however, he knew so well how to counterfeit, by means of a large share of ductility and dissimulation, that, surely, he was calculated by nature to dupe even the most cautious, and gratify his appetites, by levying contributions on all mankind.'

Fathom is a loathsome creature. He is deceitful, greedy, ungrateful, a cheat and a thief, a seducer for the love of vice, amorous when there was something to be made out of the intrigue—there was no baseness of which he was not capable. He steals valuable jewellery, and flies to Paris, assumes the title of Count, and poses as a man of fashion.

And yet he is not always successful. The Tyrolese with whom he goes to Paris, steals the jewels that Ferdinand had taken from his master's son: he is beaten at cards by a foeman unworthy of his steel; and, once in England, soon finds himself imprisoned for debt.

There is nothing more amusing anywhere in Smollett's works than the prison scenes. So soon as Fathom enters the precincts, his ears are invaded by a hoarse and dreadful voice, exclaiming:

'You, Bess Beetle, score a couple of fresh eggs, a pennyworth of butter, and half a pint of Mountain to the King; and stop credit till the bill is paid:—He is now debtor for fifteen shillings and sixpence, and d——n me if I trust him one farthing more, if he was the best king in Christendom. And, d'ye hear, send Ragged-head with five pounds of potatoes for Major Macleaver's supper, and let him have what drink he wants; the fat widow gentlewoman from Pimlico has promised to quit his score. Sir Mungo Barebones may have some hasty pudding and small beer, though I don't expect to see his coin, no more than to receive the eighteen-pence I laid out for a pair of breeches to his backside—what then? he's a quiet sort of body, and a great scholar, and it was a scandal to the place to see him going about in that naked condition. As for the mad Frenchman with the beard, if you give him so much as a cheese-paring, you b——ch, I'll send you back to the hole among your old companions, an impudent dog! I'll teach him to draw his sword upon the governor of an English county jail. What! I suppose he thought he had to do with a French hang-tang-dang, rabbit him! he shall eat his white feather, before I give him credit for a morsel of bread.'

The thumbnail sketches of the members of a little 'society' formed within the prison, as drawn by Captain Miniken, are delicious. There is Theodore, King of Corsica, a French chevalier, with a slightly disordered brain, Major Macleaver, and Sir Mungo Barebones.

'He that maintains the second rank in our assembly is one Major Macleaver, an Irish gentleman, who has served abroad; a soldier of fortune, Sir, a man of unquestionable honour and courage, but a little over-

bearing, in consequence of his knowledge and experience. He is a person of good address, to be sure, and quite free of the *mauvaise honte*, and he may have seen a good deal of service. But what then? other people may be as good as he, though they have not had such opportunities; if he speaks five or six languages, he does not pretend to any taste in the liberal arts, which are the criterion of an accomplished gentleman.

'The next is Sir Mungo Barebones, the representative of a very ancient family in the north, his affairs are very much *deranged*, but he is a gentleman of great probity and learning, and at present engaged in a very grand scheme, which, if he can bring it to bear, will render him famous to all posterity; no less than the conversion of the Jews and the Gentiles. The project, I own, looks chimerical to one who has not conversed with the author; but in my opinion, he has clearly demonstrated from an anagrammatical analysis of a certain Hebrew word, that his present Majesty, whom God preserve, is the person pointed at in Scripture as the temporal Messiah of the Jews; and if he could once raise by subscription such a trifling sum as twelve hundred thousand pounds, I make no doubt but he would accomplish his aim, vast and romantic as it seems to be.'

This is most delicious caricature; and not less amusing is the duel between Miniken and Macleaver in which, since swords might not be used in the prison, and boxing was regarded as unbefitting gentlemen, the weapon selected, at Fathom's suggestion—and something must be forgiven him for this—were pipes filled with assafœtida, which were to be smoked until one or other was overcome.

Of Fathom's adventures as a doctor at Bath and

London; of his shameful pursuit of Elenor, Celinda, and the super-beautiful Monimia, among many others; of his marriage; of the charge brought against him of bigamy; of the repeated betrayal of his earliest benefactor's son; it is unnecessary to dwell. Jonathan Wild went to the gallows, Barry Lyndon spent his last years penniless and forgotten in a debtors' prison; but Smollett had not the courage of his convictions, and at the end Fathom is forgiven and assisted by those he has injured.

Really, except in the quality of ingratitude, there is not very much, according to modern ideas, to choose between the heroes of Smollett's first three novels. All were unscrupulous libertines; each was flagrantly dishonest according to his lights. If Fathom stole his master's jewels, was it any worse than the way in which Random secured the ten guineas that enabled him to defray the expenses of his journey from Scotland to London? In all these books there are the same situations, more or less, and many of the same characters. Perhaps the outstanding feature in the last of them are the chapters describing the storm in the forest and the horrible adventure in the hut of the robbers in which he takes refuge—' a tale of natural terror ', says Scott, ' which rises into the sublime; and though often imitated, has never yet been surpassed or perhaps equalled.' Certainly this was the model for Mrs. Radcliffe, ' Monk ' Lewis, Mrs. Shelley, and the rest of what may be called ' the terror school of fiction '.

' Ferdinand Count Fathom ' no doubt brought Smollett some money, but certainly not enough to serve for any considerable length of time. Indeed, it is impossible to estimate, even vaguely, what were the author's means during the next few years, or from what source they were derived. There was, of course,

his wife's income, but that had been sadly impaired as the result of unsuccessful lawsuits against her relations in Jamaica—and even what remained was, as a rule, sadly in arrears. James Hannay thought, and it may be with reason, that 'there are probably remains of his industry yet untraced among the periodicals of the late years of the Pelham Ministry'. Also, it is likely that he did a certain amount of miscellaneous writing or had work for the booksellers. The fact that he undertook some such work is made clear by the following letter:

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'CHELSEA, *March* 1, 1754.

'Mr. Urie is misinformed about my intention to publish anything upon commerce, which is a subject quite foreign to my taste and understanding. I suppose the mistake arose from my having translated a collection from a periodical work published in French, under the title of "Journal Œconomique", in which there are some papers upon trade—but this no other than a paltry bookseller's job, in which my name ought not to be mentioned.

'I have nothing ready for the press but Doctor Smellie's second volume, containing cases in midwifery, and my translation of "Don Quixote", which will be published next year. I have likewise made some progress in the "History of the German Empire", which I believe will be printed this ensuing summer; and "Drummond's Letters" are now ready to appear.

'In short, dear John, I am so jaded that I now write with infinite reluctance, so that you must excuse my inaccuracy, and all other defects in your affectionate humble servant, 'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

Smollett, in 1753, was glad enough to accept £100 from Provost Drummond of Edinburgh for revising the manuscript of his brother, Alexander Drummond's book, 'Travels through Germany, Italy, and Greece'. In his distress he applied to his friend, Dr. George Macaulay, a Scotch doctor, who took the degree of M.D. at Padua in 1739. He removed to London in 1752, was admitted a Licentiate of the College of Physicians, and practised, first in Poland Street, and afterwards in Jermyn Street. He may have been a distant connection of the novelist, as Sir James Smollett married a Macaulay of Ardincaple.

Tobias Smollett to Dr. George Macaulay

'Dear Sir, 'CHELSEA, *May* 27, 1753.

'I yesterday met with Provost Drummond, and took my leave of him, after we had settled the manner of executing his brother's work. At parting, he told me that he left the whole to my management, and that he would entirely acquiesce in whatever I should claim, by way of acknowledgment for my trouble. About a fortnight ago he gave me leave to draw upon him for fifty guineas, at one month after date, and as I had occasion for the money, I gave a discount for the note, at the rate of 60 per cent. Such an unconscionable premium, you may be assured, I should not have given, unless upon an emergency, which would admit of no delay: the term was begun, and I was obliged to pay the costs and damages of that scoundrel Groom, according to the compromise made in Court. The other fifty guineas, I expect, will be earned in less than a month; and though Mr. Drummond desired me to write to him from time to time, I would not appear so meanly impatient as to

TOBIAS SMOLLETT

From an Engraving by Ravenet
of a Portrait by Reynolds

demand this second moiety, until he himself shall think proper to mention it.

'Nevertheless, I am so straitened in consequence of that bankruptcy, by which I lost £180, the lawsuit with Gordon and his accomplices, the want of punctuality in our Jamaica agent, and the time I have lost during these six months past, that I must be fain to raise this second payment per advance, if I can find any friend who will do me the favour. To you I should have applied myself, without scruple or remorse, had it not been for that £15 which has lain over so long; though my delay, in that particular, was as much owing to my confidence in your friendship, as to the disappointments I have sustained: and I must still beg your patience, until the arrival of the Kingston ship, which is daily expected, and in which Mr. Bontein has solemnly promised to remit what is due to us from Jamaica; he is now accountable for above £1000.

'With regard to the fifty guineas, which I very much want, I would rather owe the favour to you than to any other person; and I would take it upon that footing, which would in some measure, alleviate the mortification I have in putting you to such trouble; that is, I should be glad, and, indeed, insist upon paying interest for the money, as well as for that which I already owe—yet I am afraid it may not suit your convenience to comply with my request, as I know you have already launched out considerable sums of ready money for the relief of your neighbours in distress.

'Dear Doctor, this sort of communication is a troblesome tax, imposed upon those who maintain connexions with the needy; and, by Heaven! I despise myself for being obliged to run such risques of cooling that friendship, which hath already so

warmly interested itself in behalf of, dear Sir, your much obliged and affectionate humble servant,

'Ts. Smollett.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. George Macaulay

'Dear Doctor, 'Chelsea, *November* 16, 1754.

'As yet I have not received an answer to my letter from Scotland, as soon as it arrives I shall communicate the purport of it to you. I am extremely chagrined to find you in such an hampered situation, and my mortification is redoubled, when I reflect upon my being in some measure the cause. I hoped that cursed ship from the East Indies would have arrived before this time, and brought some good news, but everything has of late thwarted my schemes and expectations, and therefore I cannot help dreading a repulse from Scotland also. Had I credit enough to borrow the money in London, you should not be without it a day longer, even though I should pay 50 per cent. for the loan; but, believe me, I should find it difficult to raise half the sum in England, even to save me from jail. Never was I so much harassed with duns as now; a persecution which I owe to the detention of that remittance from Jamaica, which I have expected every day since last Christmas, upon the faith of promises sent from time to time. I am, with great sincerity, gratitude, and affection, dear Sir, yours, etc.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. George Macaulay

'Dear Sir, 'Chelsea, *December* 11, 1754.

'Upon my honour, I have not the least answer to the letter I wrote to Scotland, nor is one farthing

arrived from Jamaica; circumstances which fill me with astonishment and mortification. And what increases my wonder is to hear that Mr. Telfer is, or was lately, at Edinburgh. I would still hope that a favourable answer might be received from that country; otherwise, methinks they would have signified their refusal, as I pressed the thing in such strong terms. For my own part, I never was reduced to such a dilemma as I am now brought into; for I have promised to pay away tradesmen's bills, to a considerable amount, by Christmas; and my credit absolutely depends upon my punctuality: Nay, I am put to very great straits for present subsistence, as I have done nothing all the last summer but worked upon "Don Quixote", for which I was paid five years ago. If my joint security could be of any service in raising a sum of money, until matters shall clear up, I would cheerfully pay the premium for insuring my life; and as my friends are good, I think it would not be a bad expedient. In short, I am so distracted with my difficulties, that I cannot form any other feasible scheme for the present emergency and I wish you would consider how it might be altered or improved. I am, with great affection, gratitude, and regard, yours, etc.

'[P.S.] I was last night robbed of my watch and money, in the stage coach between this and London, and am just going to town to inquire about the robber.'

The 'History of Germany', mentioned in the letter of March 1, 1754, to Dr. Moore, was written for 'The Modern Part of an Universal History, from the earliest account of Time. Compiled from original writings by the authors of the Ancient Part.' This work was published in forty-four volumes between 1759 and 1766. To Smollett are attributed the

histories of Italy and France, and it is thought that he may have written other sections.

There is in existence a memorandum of agreement—it was formerly in the Morrison Collection of Autographs—signed by Robert Dudley, James Rivington, and William Strahan to the effect that Dr. Smollett engages to compile 'A new Collection of Voyages and Travels', in seven volumes, in duodecimo, after the style of a work called, 'A Tour through Great Britain', to be finished by August 1754. This work appeared in 1756 under the style of 'A Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages, digested in a chronological sense; the whole exhibiting a clear View of the Customs, Manners, Religion, Government, Commerce, and Natural History of most Nations of the Known World; illustrated and adorned with a variety of genuine Charts, Maps, Plans, Heads, etc., curiously engraved'. It was to these 'Voyages' that Smollett contributed his account of the expedition to Carthagena, to which reference has been made in an earlier chapter: whether he wrote anything else for it is not known.

This journeyman work—the carrying out of these schemes of publishers and booksellers—was naturally not to Smollett's taste, and was only undertaken by him because of his eternal want of pence. He was, it would appear, always well—indeed, almost handsomely—treated by his employers, and he was on good terms all his life with Strahan, Miller, the Rivingtons, and the rest of the fraternity. At the same time he could not refrain from making fun of them in 'Humphry Clinker', which he effected by fictitious letters exchanged between Henry Davis, a publisher, and the Rev. Mr. Jonathan Dustwich, in connection with the publication of that novel:

To Mr. Henry Davis, Bookseller in London

'Respected Sir, 'ABERGAVENNY, *Aug.* 4.

'I have received your esteemed favour of the thirteenth ultimo, whereby it appeareth, that you have perused those same letters, the which were delivered unto you by my friend, the Reverend Mr. Hugo Bhen; and I am pleased to find you think they may be printed with a good prospect of success; inasmuch as the objections you mention, I humbly conceive, are such as may be redargued, if not entirely removed.—And, first, in the first place, as touching what prosecutions may arise from printing the private correspondence of persons still living, give me leave, with all due submission, to observe, that the letters in question were not written and sent under the seal of secrecy; that they have no tendency to the *mala fama* or prejudice of any person whatsoever; but rather to the information and edification of mankind. So that it becometh a sort of duty to promulgate them *in usum publicum*. Besides, I have consulted Mr. Davy Higgins an eminent attorney of this place, who, after due inspection and consideration, declareth, that he doth not think the said letters contain any matter which will be held actionable in the eye of the law. Finally, if you and I should come to a right understanding, I do declare *in verbo sacerdotis*, that, in case of any such prosecution, I will take the whole upon my own shoulders, even *quoad* fine and imprisonment, though I must confess I should not care to undergo flagellation. *Tam ad turpitudinem, quam ad amaritudinem poenae spectans.* Secondly, concerning the personal resentment of Mr. Justice Lismahago, I may say *non flocci facio*—I would not willingly vilipend any Christian, if peradventure he deserveth that epithet. Albeit, I am

much surprised that more care is not taken to exclude from the commission all such vagrant foreigners as may be justly suspected of disaffection to our happy constitution of Church and State. God forbid that I should be so uncharitable, as to affirm positively that the said Lismahago is no better than a Jesuit in disguise; but this I will assert and maintain *totis viribus*, that from the day he qualified, he has never been once seen *intra templi parietes*, that is to say, within the Parish Church.

'Thirdly, with respect to what passed at Mr. Kendal's table, when the said Lismahago was so brutal on his reprehensions, I must inform you, my good Sir, that I was obliged to retire, not by fear arising from his minatory reproaches, which, as I said above, I value not a rush, but from the sudden effect produced by a barbel's row, which I had eaten at dinner, not knowing that the said row is at certain seasons violently cathartic, as Galen observeth in his chapter περὶ ἰχθύος.

Fourthly, and lastly, with reference to the manner in which I got possession of the letters, it is a circumstance which concerns my own conscience only. Sufficeth it to say, I have fully satisfied the parties in whose custody they were; and by this time, I hope I have also satisfied you in such ways, that the last hand may be put to our agreement, and the work proceed with all convenient expedition. In which hope I rest, respected Sir, your very humble servant,

'JONATHAN DUSTWICH.

'P.S.—I propose, *Deo volente*, to have the pleasure of seeing you in the great city, towards All-Hallowtide, when I shall be glad to treat with you concerning a parcel of MS. sermons of a certain clergyman deceased; a cake of the right leaven for the present taste of the public. *Verbum sapienti*, etc. 'J. D.'

'Sir,

'I received yours in course of post, and shall be glad to treat with you for the MS. which I have delivered to your friend Mr. Bhen; but can by no means comply with the terms proposed. Those things are so uncertain. Writing is all a lottery. I have been a loser by the works of the greatest men of the age. I could mention particulars, and name names, but don't choose it. The taste of the town is so changeable. Then there have been so many letters upon travels lately published. What between Smollett's, Sharpe's, Derrick's, Thicknesse's, Baltimore's, and Baretti's,[1] together with Shandy's Sentimental Travels, the public seems to be cloyed with that kind of entertainment. Nevertheless, I will, if you please, run the risk of printing and publishing, and you shall have half the profits of the impression.

'You need not take the trouble to bring up your sermons on my account. Nobody reads sermons but Methodists and Dissenters. Besides, for my own part, I am quite a stranger to that sort of reading; and the two persons, whose judgment I depended upon in these matters are out of the way; one is gone abroad, carpenter of a man-of-war; and the other has been silly enough to abscond in order to avoid a prosecution for blasphemy. I'm a great loser by his going off. He had left a manual of devotion half-finished on my hands, after having received money for the whole copy. He was the soundest divine, and had the most orthodox pen of all my people, and I never knew his judgment

[1] Samuel Sharpe's 'Letters from Italy' (1766); Derrick's 'Collection of Voyages' (1762); Philip Thicknesse's 'Observations on the Customs and Manners of the French Nation' (1766); Frederick, sixth Earl of Baltimore's 'A Tour in the East' (1766); Giuseppe Baretti's 'Account of the Manners and Customs of Italy' (1768).

fail, but in flying from his bread and butter on this occasion.

'By owning you was not put in bodily fear by Lismahago, you preclude yourself from the benefit of a good plea, over and above the advantage of binding him over. In the late war, I inserted in my evening paper, a paragraph that came by the post, reflecting upon the behaviour of a certain regiment in battle. An officer of said regiment came to my shop, and, in the presence of my wife and journeyman, threatened to cut off my ears. As I exhibited marks of bodily fear more ways than one, to the conviction of the bystanders, I bound him over; my action lay, and I recovered.

'As for flagellation, you have nothing to fear, and nothing to hope on that head. There has been but one printer flogged at the cart-tail these thirty years, that was Charles Watson; and he assured me it was no more than a flea-bite. C[harles] S[talker] has been threatened several times by the House of L——; but it came to nothing. If an information should be moved for, and granted against you, as the editor of these letters, I hope you will have the honesty and wit enough to appear and take your trial. If you should be sentenced to the pillory, your fortune is made—as times go, that's a sure step to honour and preferment. I shall think myself happy if I can lend you a lift; and am very sincerely, 'Yours,

'HENRY DAVIS.

'LONDON, *Aug.* 10.

'Please my kind service to your neighbour, my cousin Madoc—I have sent an almanack and court calendar for him at Mr. Sutton's, bookseller in Gloucester, carriage paid, which he will please to accept as a small token of my regard. My wife, who is

very fond of toasted cheese, presents her compliments to him, and begs to know if there's any of that kind which he was so good as to send us last Christmas to be sold in London. 'H. D.'

Far more important than the 'Universal History' and the 'Voyages', and much more to Smollett's liking, was the very considerable undertaking to translate 'Don Quixote'. This appeared in 1755, published by T. Osborn, T. & T. Longman, A. Miller, C. Hitch and L. Hawes, J. Hodges, and J. and J. Rivington, with the following title-page: 'The History and Adventures of the renowned Don Quixote. Translated from the Spanish of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. To which is prefixed some Account of the Author's Life, by T. Smollett, M.D. Illustrated with seventy-eight copper-plates designed by Hayman, and engraved by the best artists'. Smollett wrote a brief introduction:

'The translator's aim, in this undertaking, was to maintain that ludicrous solemnity and self-importance by which the inimitable Cervantes has distinguished the character of Don Quixote, without raising him to the insipid rank of a dry philosopher, or debasing him to the melancholy circumstances and unentertaining caprice of an ordinary madman; and to preserve the native humour of Sancho Panza, from degenerating into mere proverbial phlegm, or affected buffoonery.

'He has endeavoured to retain the spirit and ideas, without servilely adhering to the literal expression, of the original; from which, however, he has not so far deviated, as to destroy that formality of idiom so peculiar to the Spaniards, and so essential to the character of the work.

'The satire and propriety of many allusions, which had been lost in the change of customs and lapse of

time, will be restored in explanatory notes; and the whole conducted with that care and circumspection, which ought to be exerted by every author, who in attempting to improve upon a task already performed, subjects himself to the most invidious comparison.

'Whatever may be the fate of the performance, he cannot charge himself with carelessness or precipitation; for it was begun, and the greatest part of it actually finished four years ago; and he has been for some time employed in revising and correcting it for the press.'

'I am sorry my friend Smollett loses his time in translations, he has certainly far more invention, though I think it flags a little in his last work, ["Ferdinand Count Fathom"]', Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote from Lovere on January 1, 1755, to her daughter, the Countess of Bute. '"Don Quixote" is a difficult work, I shall never desire to read any new attempt to new-dress him.' Perhaps, however, next to writing a work of genius, the next best thing is to translate a book of great distinction. As to whether Smollett knew Spanish or not, the present writer, having but a smattering of that language, cannot hazard an opinion. Mr. Charles Duff, of the Foreign Office, the talented translator of the works of Quevedo, would seem, however, to be in no doubt.

'Smollett's novels', he has written to the present writer, 'all bear the stamp of Spanish picaresque fiction, and nobody acquainted with Spanish literature would hesitate to say that he had read their masterpieces in this branch of letters. There is probably no Spanish author Smollett more resembles than certain works of Quevedo, in matter, though not in style. From Quevedo's "Life of Paul the Great Rascal" to Smollett's "Roderick Random" is not a big step; and

Quevedo's "Visions" contain a good many ideas that were worked by Smollett.

'As regards Smollett's translation of Cervantes, I have compared it with the original and with other standard translations. Whilst "cribbing" much of the meanings from Jarvis's translation (and perhaps glancing at Shelton's), Smollett's may be called, in spite of criticisms to the contrary, very much his own work. It runs more smoothly than all other translations; the inaccuracies are not fatal to the work as a whole; and my view is that it deserves to be reprinted, perhaps in preference to the translation by Motteux.'

On the other hand Dr. John Shebbeare in his attack some years later on the *Critical Review* related this story: 'A. Miller [the publisher], soliciting subscriptions to this edition of "Don Quixote", when it was objected by one of his own countrymen, that the translator did not understand Spanish, assured him that the author had been full six weeks to study that language among the native Spaniards, at Brussels.'

Chapter VII

1755–1756

Visits his mother and sister in Scotland—Edits and contributes to the new Critical Review*—Contents of the first number—Success of the venture—Smollett, Oliver Goldsmith, and the Griffiths—Samuel Richardson—John Home—Dr. John Shebbeare and Dr. James Grainger attack Smollett—His replies—Joseph Reed—Smollett's hospitality at Monmouth House.*

AFTER seeing his translation of 'Don Quixote' through the press, Smollett, for the first time since he left it in 1739, went on a visit to his native land. His sister's husband, Alexander Telfer, had in 1749 purchased (for £2062 : 6 : 8) the small estate of Scotston in Peeblesshire, and his mother was at this time residing there with her daughter and son-in-law. His coming had been kept as a surprise for Mrs. Smollett. On his arrival he was introduced to her as a friend of her son, whom he had known in Jamaica. She at once began to ply him with questions, and begged him to tell her all he could about her Tobias. The farce was played for a while, but at last Smollett, who had tried to disguise himself by frowning, broke out into a smile. 'My son, my son, I have found you at last,' she said, laughing and crying together, and throwing her arms round him. 'If you had continued to "gloom", you might have imposed on me for some time longer, but your old roguish smile betrayed you at once.' From Scotston

Smollett went to Glasgow to stay awhile with Dr. John Moore, and met many of his acquaintances of his university days, and then returned to London to resume his labours.

'*Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore*

'Dear Sir, 'CHELSEA, *Dec.* 11, 1755.

I never repined so much at my own want of importance as at this conjuncture, when you have occasion for the interest of your friends; and it is with great mortification I now assure you that I have no sort of connection with the great man who is to decide between you and your competitor. Far from being used to the great, as you seem to imagine, I have neither interest nor acquaintance with any person whose countenance or favour could be of advantage to myself or my friends. I live in the shade of obscurity, neglecting and neglected, and spend my vacant hours among a set of honest phlegmatic Englishmen, whom I cultivate for their integrity of heart and simplicity of manners. I have not spoken to a nobleman for some years, and those I once had the honour of knowing, were either such as had little interest of their own, or very little consideration for me.

'I am heartily sorry to find your cause is so slenderly supported with the Duke of Argyle; because without his concurrence or rather his creative word, I believe no professorship can be filled up—merit is altogether out of the question. Everything here, as well as in your country, is carried by cabal; and in Scotland the cabal of the Campbells will always preponderate. The time is fast approaching when all the lands, all the places of honour, power, and profit, will be in the possession of that worthy clan. Then you may exclaim—*Non numinis sed Campbellorum omnia plena!*

'Present my best wishes to Mrs. Moore and all your family; and be assured (if such a declaration can be of any consequence to a man whom I cannot serve in anything essential) that I am, with equal truth and affection, dear Sir, your very humble servt.,

'Ts. Smollett.'

Soon after Smollett returned to London from his visit to Scotland, he was approached with an invitation to join the editorial staff of a new monthly periodical, which was to be run on High Church and Tory lines, in opposition to the Whig production, the *Monthly Review*, which had been founded in 1749 by Ralph Griffiths and since controlled by him. It is a little difficult to define Smollett's position on *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature*. It was announced that this was conducted 'By a Society of Gentlemen', and certainly it would appear that Smollett was not what would now be called the responsible editor. It is most likely that he was, so to speak, given the run of the *Review* to write what he would and to exercise a general supervision.

It is probable that the note 'To the Public' in the first number came from his pen.

'The candour and indulgence of the Public, will, we hope, excuse any little defects that may appear in the disposition of the articles that compose this first Essay; as we do not pretend to be altogether perfect as yet, in the mechanical part of our undertaking; and have been more studious to cater variety for our guests, than to arrange the dishes of the entertainment.

'If we have in this Specimen commended too lavishly, or condemned too severely; if we have

omitted beauties, and exaggerated blemishes; if we have afforded any reason to doubt our taste or integrity; we profess ourselves open to conviction and reproof; and should any person take the trouble to demonstrate our errors and misconduct, we will endeavour to improve by his censure, and kiss the rod of correction with great humility.

'Far from thinking ourselves infallible in the art of criticism, we shall thankfully acknowledge any hints of assistance we may receive from the learned and ingenious of every denomination. We request the favour of their remarks; and, in a particular manner, address ourselves to the GENTLEMEN OF THE TWO UNIVERSITIES, for whom we profess the most profound veneration, and with whom we shall be proud to cultivate an occasional correspondence.'

Smollett was certainly the leading spirit of the *Critical Review*. His considerable general knowledge, his enthusiasm, and his immense energy were of the greatest value to him in the conduct of the periodical. His ready pen was also of service, but as the articles were anonymous, and Smollett left no record of his contributions, it is, in most cases, dangerous to endeavour to identify them. The names of the other 'three gentlemen of approved abilities' assisting on the control of the publication are not known; but one of them no doubt was Archibald Hamilton, who had come to London, having had to leave Edinburgh, owing to his participation in the Porteous Riots in 1736, and had presently become foreman in the printing office of William Strahan. The *Critical Review* from its foundation was 'Printed by R. Baldwin, at the Rose, in Paternoster Row', but from January 1758 it was announced as 'Printed for A. Hamilton, Chancery Lane'.

The first number of the *Critical Review* is dated 'January and February 1756', and it may not be without interest to give the contents of the works that were chosen for notice: Thomas Sheridan's 'British Education'; Dr. James Grieve's 'A Cornelius Celsus of Medicine'; the Rev. James MacKnight's 'A Harmony of the Four Gospels'; Dr. Thomas Birch's 'History of the Royal Society of London', 'The Fortune-Teller, or, Footman Ennobled'; William Borlase's 'Observations on Sicily'; Thomas Blackwell's 'Memoirs of the Court of Augustin'; Samuel Pegge's 'Dissertations on Anglo-Saxon Remains'; Dr. Huxham's 'Observations on Antimony'; Arthur Murphy's 'The Apprentice'; 'The Universal Visitor, or, Monthly Memorialist, for January 1756'; and a few short notices of other books. This, it must be admitted, was a very representative selection.

On the whole the notices, if erring on the side of severity, as was the custom of the day, were fair enough, but bad work was harshly handled.

The review of 'The Fortune Teller, or, Footman Ennobled, being the History of the Right Hon. Earl of R—— and Miss Lucy M—n—y', begins:

'Nothing could have obliged us to the perusal of a performance so wearisome as "The Fortune Teller", but the absolute necessity under which we are laid by our plan, of giving some account of everything that appears in print. In the conduct of the piece, there is nothing either entertaining, interesting, or instructive, nor yet the slightest gleam of talent or invention. The narration, which is excessively insipid, manifests as great an ignorance of the language in which it is written, as the piece does want of genius and observation.'

'The Apprentice', Arthur Murphy's first farce, produced the following:

'The author ushers in this performance into the world by an Advertisement containing a panegyric upon the actors by whom it was indebted; and, indeed, considering the success which attended the representation, he cannot say too much in their praise; for, without their assistance, "The Apprentice" would hardly have emerged from his native obscurity, by the intrinsic merit of the piece.'

Smollett's low flash-point did not make him an ideal editor or colleague. His irritable temper was always upsetting the apple-cart, and he must, at times, have been a thorn in the sides of the proprietors of the venture. It must, though, in fairness to him be said that, however much he may have abused any book that he reviewed, his prejudice was literary rather than personal. It is worthy to note—because it was much commented upon at the time—that his own works received great prominence in the periodical with which he was so intimately associated. On the other hand, this association was not concealed when the first volume of his "History" appeared. That work was given the place of honour in the issue of January 1758, but the notice concluded: 'We have said enough to express our approbation of this performance: more particular eulogism on the work might be ascribed to our partiality for a friend and colleague'.

The *Critical Review* was from the start a success, and when the first six numbers were bound up in volume form, they were introduced by the following Preface, which it is reasonable to suppose was written by Smollett:

'The *Critical Review* having passed through a

series of numbers with uninterrupted success, the authors beg leave to present it in the form of a volume, together with their warmest acknowledgments to the public, for the candour and indulgence with which it has been received: an indulgence the more remarkable, as they have been in a peculiar manner, exposed to virulent invective, slanderous insinuation, and other low arts of malice practised by authors who have smarted from their animadversions, and persons who had an interest in depreciating their labours.

'Persecution is the fate of all reformers; and from this, the authors of the *Critical Review* would have been sorry to find themselves altogether exempted. They rejoice in it, as the testimony of their enemies in their favour; as the effect of resentment which their spirit and candour has kindled; of that envy which hath been excited by their success: and even though their endeavours had miscarried, they would have found consolation in considering themselves as confessors and martyrs to true taste and ingenuity.

'Not that they pretend to infallibility in criticism, or presume to decide with dogmatical authority: they have delivered their sentiments, as opinions only, and these they have supported with reasons on which every reader may exercise his own understanding.

'Howsoever they have erred in judgment, they have declared their thoughts without prejudice, fear, or affection; and strove to forget the author's person, while his works fell under their consideration. They have treated simple dulness as the object of mirth or compassion, according to the nature of its appearance: petulance and self-conceit they have corrected with more severe strictures; and though they have given no quarter to insolence, scurrility, and sedition, they will venture to affirm, that no production of merit has been defrauded of its due share of applause.

On the contrary, they have cherished with commendation, the very faintest bloom of genius, even when vapid and unformed, in hopes of its being warmed into flavour, and afterwards producing agreeable fruit by dint of proper care and culture; and never, without reluctance, disapproved, even of a bad writer, who had the least title to indulgence.

'The judicious reader will perceive that their aim has been to exhibit a succinct plan of every performance, to point out the most striking beauties and glaring defects; to illustrate their remarks with proper quotations; and to convey these remarks in such a manner, as might best conduce to the entertainment of the public.

'As variety is the soul of such entertainment, and the confined nature of the plan would not admit of minute investigation; they have endeavoured to discover and disclose that criterion by which the character of a work may at once be distinguished, without dragging the reader through a tedious, cold, inanimated disquisition, which may be termed a languid paraphrase rather than a spirited criticism.

'They value themselves upon having reviewed every material performance, immediately after its first appearance, without reserving productions for a dearth of articles, and then raising them, like state carcases from oblivion, after they have been blown upon by every minor critic, and the curiosity of the public is gorged even to satiety.

'They likewise claim some merit for having presented the essence of near 120 British performances in the small compass of six numbers, of about 30 foreign articles, besides those upon painting and statuary, in which they stand unrivalled by any periodical writer of this Kingdom.

'Hitherto, the public has seen but the infancy of

their correspondence, which they found great difficulty in establishing; and this hath lately suffered some interruption from our hostilities with France, in consequence of which, they have been obliged to alter one canal of communication: but now a certain intercourse is settled with Paris, Rome, Lucca, Florence, Berlin, and The Hague, which they flatter themselves will produce an ample fund of amusement, the more acceptable as Europe is likely to become the scene of events uncommonly interesting, and the war will stop many other usual sources of literary intelligence.

'Animated by the public favour, the *Critical Reviewers* will double their endeavours to fulfil effectually the purposes for which they engaged in this undertaking; they promise that neither prayers nor threats shall induce them to part with their integrity and independence; that they shall thankfully receive all kinds of assistance or correction, and that their view shall be solely directed to the entertainment and information of mankind.'

One of the services that Smollett rendered to the *Critical Review* was to enlist as a contributor Oliver Goldsmith, who had been on the staff of the *Monthly Review*. Goldsmith's quarrels with the proprietor, Griffiths, have become a part of literary history: it was not so much of underpayment that he complained —though sadly underpaid he was—but of the tampering with his manuscripts by 'illiterate bookselling' Griffiths or Mrs. Griffiths. Goldsmith wrote an article for the *Critical Review*, which appeared in November 1757—and then broke off his connection with it. John Forster, in his biography of the author of 'The Vicar of Wakefield', hazards a suggestion as to the reason for this abrupt and unlooked-for disappearance. Griffiths had declared open war upon

the newer periodical, and stated that at least the *Monthly Review* was not written by 'physicians without practice, authors without learning, men without decency, or writers without judgment'. To this attack Smollett replied with the utmost vigour in the issue of the *Critical Review* for November 1757, in a letter addressed 'To the Old Gentlewoman who directs the *Monthly Review*':

'Madam,

'When the *Critical Review* was first published, we little dreamed that ever we should have occasion to address you in public. We respected your sex and age too much, and payed too great a regard to our own characters, to entertain the least desire of exposing your infirmities to a censorious world. We were willing that you should doze on, without interruption, in your old lethargy of sense, in your habitual privation of taste and intellect; that under the shadow of your original dulness, you should continue to expectorate your phlegm, and utter your reveries for the entertainment of deistical barbers and crazy anabaptists. We had no intention to disturb you in your last moments; but desired you should have the privilege of dying in peace, and being decently buried in oblivion. We never doubted, but that conscious of your own circumstances, you would have thought yourself happy in our forbearance, and avoided all occasions of incurring our resentment; but, so it is, Goody, you have abused our good-nature and humanity: you have misconstrued our compassion, and grown indolent under the wings of toleration. In your animadversions in that curious production, intituled, the *Occasional Critic*, you have wantonly and without the least provocation, squirted some of your malevolence at the authors of the *Critical Review*. Whether this attack was the effect of

spirituous cordials too plentifully administered to an enfeebled constitution, or to an instinctive effort of nature, longing to be roused by stimulating corrosives, or to a delirium before death, we shall not pretend to determine: but we will calmly expostulate with you, upon the supposition that you are now sober and composed, and have recovered that small share of rationality which you formerly enjoyed by the grace and mercy of heaven. . . .

'It is diverting enough to hear the directness of the *Monthly Review* accuse any society, as *physicians without practice, authors without learning, and critics without judgment.* Did not your conscience rise up against you when you wrote this paragraph? or, did you in your dotage, mistake the application, by throwing those epithets at us, which so properly belong to your own understrappers? Though we never visited your garrets, we know what sort of doctors and authors you employ as journeymen in your manufacture. You cannot, with all your obscurity, so effectually wrap your sons in clouds, but that they will sometimes expose their features to the public, which will always recognise the productions of your academy, even without the help of those significant emblems, the owl and the long-eared animal, which you have so sagely displayed for the mirth and information of mankind.'

It was this article, Forster thinks, that was the cause of Goldsmith's withdrawal from the *Critical Review*, for, as he says, 'though Goldsmith might not object to avenge some part of his own quarrel under cover of that of Smollett, he could hardly have relished the allusions, all too true, to garrets, journeyman authors, and understrappers'.

Smollett was always, intentionally or unintentionally, falling foul of some author or other who objected

to the treatment meted to his work in the *Critical Review*. In the issue for May 1756 there is a short article—which, as a matter of fact, to-day seems harmless enough—on 'The Paths of Virtue delineated; or, The History in Miniature of the celebrated Pamela, Clarissa Harlowe, and Sir Charles Grandison, familiarised and adapted to the Capacities of Youth'. Smollett was not the author, but hearing that Richardson had taken umbrage, at once tendered an apology, which apology was accepted in good part by his brother-author.

From Samuel Richardson to Tobias Smollett

'Dear Sir, 'London, *August* 13, 1756.

'I am greatly obliged to you for your kind letter of the 10th. I had not the least imagination that the passage in the *Critical Review* was Dr. Smollett's—when Mr. Miller mentioned it to me, in a manner very favourable to both, I had not heard of it—to this hour I have not seen it. The author of it, whoever he be, is very welcome to censure what I have written. But, perhaps, he would have forborne the uncalled for and unprovoked temptation, had he considered that prolixity, length at least, cannot be avoided in letters written to the moments. I wish he would try his hand at that sort of writing.

'I am no less obliged to you, good Sir, for your taking so kindly the little hint I presumed to offer on a plan I was very much pleased with, and which I wished to be followed, as to the main of it, by any gentleman who should be induced to undertake the writing of a new History of England. I had not offered those poor and insignificant hints, had I not been greatly taken with your plan.

'I repeatedly thank you, Sir, for the whole of your

very kind letter, and am, with wishes for your success in every undertaking, as well as that before us,

'Your obliged and humble servant,

'S. RICHARDSON.'

John Home's 'Douglas' was vigorously handled in the pages of the *Critical Review*, to the great annoyance of Smollett, who had not seen the article before it appeared, and he expressed his regret to Dr. John Moore, who, when Home came to London, had sent him a letter of introduction to the novelist. The regret was duly conveyed to Home, who remained on good terms with Smollett for the rest of his life.

Dr. John Shebbeare, who regarded himself as aggrieved by an article in the *Critical Review*, broke out into a pamphlet of no less than one hundred and sixty-eight pages. This was styled, 'The Occasional Critic, or, The Decrees of the Scotch Tribunal in the *Critical Review* rejudged'. This was, in fact, a general examination of the articles that had appeared in the periodical; but it is so dull, diffuse, and at times so incoherent that it can be dismissed with this bare mention.

Dr. James Grainger, an army surgeon, was vastly angered by an article in the *Critical Review* for December 1758 on his translation of Tibullus, which certainly did not err on the side of gentleness, as the brief passage shows:

'The translator has been candid enough to print the Latin text opposed to the verses, that the learned reader may the more easily have recourse to comparison: he has likewise obliged us with a vast congeries of notes grammatical, critical, and explanatory, great part of which he has borrowed from *Broukhusius* the Dutch editor of Tibullus. Indeed the sluices of annotation

have been opened so successfully in the Batavian task, that Tibullus is floated round with criticism, and stands *à l'abri*, like a fort in the Low-Countries, when its *environs* are laid under water. This, we must own, is a huge farrago of learned lumber, jumbled together to very little purpose, seemingly calculated to display the translator's reading, rather than to illustrate the sense and beauty of the original. The importance of some of these notes we shall mention, after having observed that the Doctor has prefixed to the work, a life of Tibullus gleaned from his writings, in which life we find very little either to inform, interest, or amuse the reader.'

Grainger was furious, and he did not feel the less injured because he was personally acquainted with Smollett and had visited him at Monmouth House. He seems to have regarded the review of his book as an act of treachery. He expressed his feelings in a letter to a friend:

'Last night I compared it [the translation] accurately with the original, and was amazed to find it so exact, and at the same time so flowing and easy. What little inaccuracies I observed, or imagined I observed, I have sent you, and you may make what use of them you think proper. On Saturday last Miller waited on me, to tell me that our book was not condemned by the best judges; but Smollett has been at it in the *Critical Review*. He has a personal pique to me, which upon this occasion has betrayed him into many false criticisms, delivered in very illiberal expressions. My friends strongly solicit me to expose him, to which I have no other objection than the entering the lists with so unmannerly an adversary. Perhaps, however, I may give him a drubbing, which, if I stoop to, he shall remember it, and yet my severity even then will be somewhat abated, as he has allowed your Ovid's

Elegy to be a good translation. The notes the Doctor particularly falls foul of, calling them a parcel of learned trash.'

The enraged author got to work with the 'drubbing', which took the form of a sixpenny pamphlet—mercifully of but a paltry twenty-five pages—which appeared early in the following year: 'A Letter to Tobias Smollett, M.D., Occasioned by his criticism upon a Translation of Tibullus. By Dr. Grainger.' He chose as his motto the lines from Milton: 'Whoever he be, tho' this to some extent may seem a slight contest, I shall yet continue to think that man full of other secret injustice and deceitful pride, who shall offer in public to assume the skill, tho' it be but of a tongue which he hath not, and would catch his readers to believe of his ability, that which is not in him.'

Grainger threw good taste to the winds, and wrote of 'Dr. Toby'—a gratuitous piece of impertinence, and generally had at Smollett with all the bitterness he could muster:

'And now most singular Critic! what have you to alledge in defence of your learning? You, who have so generously *tasked your universally acknowledged Abilities*, (as you modestly express it) *to revive the true spirit of criticism, and vindicate the cause of literature from wretched hirelings without talent, candour, spirit and circumspection*. But this instance of your profound knowledge in literary matters, tho' *curious*, is not *singular* in one who metamorphosed a petrified embryo into an eminent writer on midwifery. . . .

'And here you must permit me to borrow a metaphor from you, and as the Reservoir (an image of exquisite propriety!) which *was to dispel those mists of obscurity thro' which one people has hitherto beheld another*,

which was to extend and elevate the understanding, and to unite the more rational part of our fellow-creatures in one social family: as this wonderful *reservoir*,[1] I say, has been demonstrated by different hands, to be chiefly supplied from the muddy streams of ignorance, false taste, partiality and malevolence, let me advise you to lay aside the office of turn-cock, in which you have been so unsuccessfully active. Be a romance-writer, raise contributions by another Regicide, translate from the *French*, or *si Dis placet*, murder the Spanish. But henceforth if you have any shame left, drop the rod of *Aristarchus*. Neither, on your demise as a critic, vainly console yourself with the imagination of having died *a martyr to true taste and ingenuity*, the legality,[2] of your pretentions to either having been full disproved.

'To conclude, I make no doubt, but in the next number of the above-mentioned mist-dispelling reservoir, the *Critical Review*, you will modestly consider this *Letter as one of the testimonies of your impartialities and power:* You will also probably variously compound the terms of dunce, poetaster, whipt cur, and other such epithets, to which detected ignorance has recourse. But rail on, good Dr. Tobias, and welcome. Do any thing except praise me, as I entirely join in opinion with Mr. Pope, when he observes that,

> Of all mad creatures, if the learn'd are right,
> It is the slaver kills, and not the bite:
> A fool quite angry is quite innocent:
> Alas! 'tis ten times worse when they repent.'

Smollett was the last man in the world to sit quiet under such an attack, and the *Critical Review* for February 1759 contained a rejoinder that was at least adequate:

[1] *See* Plan of the *Critical Review*.
[2] *See* Preface to the *Critical Review*.

'What right Dr. James Grainger has to address himself in this manner to Dr. Tobias Smollett, on account of an article in the *Critical Review*, we shall not pretend to enquire, yet, as Dr. Smollett has never owned himself author of this Review, the public will at once determine how far Dr. James Grainger has on this occasion acted with decency and candour. Perhaps the best apology that can be made for the said Dr. Grainger, not only with respect to the manner, but also touching the matter of his expostulation, would be, to declare him at once *non compos*; and, in that case, we should neglect this production as the effect of lunacy. Certain it is, the poor man seems to have written with the slaver at his mouth; and the wisest course his friends can take with this furious bard, is to keep him from the use of pen, ink and paper. We know that Dr. Smollett has been congratulated by some of his best friends on this attack, so replete with dullness and illiberal abuse: we shall not, therefore, as Dr. Grainger seems to apprehend, retaliate upon him with the epithets of *whipt Cur*, *Dunce* and *Poetaster*; we shall leave that task to those who are condemned to read his works, and calmly consider the objections he has raised to the sentence; sensible as we are of the truth of that line which he himself has quoted from Mr. Pope:

A fool quite angry, is quite innocent.

'But previous to this consideration, it may not be amiss to observe that the surest criterion of conscious dullness irritated, is the practise of personal abuse. Dr. James Grainger, not contented with exposing the supposed critic as an author, drops some shrewd hints concerning his private affairs; and has, in the Christian name of that gentleman, found a very extraordinary fund of humour and ridicule. Had the parents of Dr. Smollett foreseen that this circumstance would

turn out so much to his disadvantage, they certainly would have given him some other appellation than that of *Tobias*, which, with the unlucky diminutive *Toby*, has been such a humorous source of triumph to his adversaries. We wonder that the facetious Dr. Grainger, and his witty coadjutors, had not ransacked the Apocrypha for the story of *Tobit*, in whose eyes the *sparrows muted warm dung*; and his son *Tobias*, who went forth, and *his dog went with him*. What abundance of waggish things might have been said by this sprightly triumvirate of Tobit's blindness, which even the physician could not cure, of his altercation with his wife *Anna* and of Toby and his dog! But, alas! Dr. James Grainger and his beefeaters are but humble imitators, even in this species of wit. Other writers of the same rank have happily punned upon the *cognomen*, as he has sported upon the *prenomen* of the unfortunate critic. Whoever looks into the works of that stupendous genius, Dr. H—ll, will see *Smollett* tortured into *Smallhead* and *Smallwit*; and, in the progress of dullness, we doubt not we shall meet with it in many other disguises. After all the dunces of the last age have been beforehand with all these worthies. They not only punned upon the denomination of *Alexander Pope*, but even wrote a poem against him, intituled *Sawney*. Think not reader, we presume to compare Dr. Smollett as a writer, with Mr. *Pope*: we are sensible of the infinite disparity; but in one respect their fate is similar. They have been both abused, belied, and accused of ignorance, malice, and want of genius, by the conceited dunces of the age, at a time when their works were read and approved, at least, as much as those of any other English contemporary author.'

In the year 1759 Smollett was the target for yet

another attack: 'A Sop in the Pan for a Physical Critick: in A Letter to Dr. Sm-ll-t, occasion'd by a Criticism on a late Mock-Tragedy call'd Madrigal and Trulletta. By a Halter-Maker'. 'A Halter-Maker' was the pseudonym adopted for the nonce by the minor dramatist, Joseph Reed—probably suggested by the fact that the paternal occupation was rope-making. One extract from this lampoon will suffice:

'In the close of the year 1755 a certain Caledonian quack, by the courtesy of England called a Doctor of Physic, whose real or assumed name is Ferdinando MacFathomless, formed a project for initiating and perfecting the male inhabitants of this island in the use and management of the linguary weapon by the erection of a scolding amphitheatre. For this purpose, he selected and engaged on weekly salary about a dozen of the most eminent Professors of Vociferation in this Academy; but, after he had been at a considerable expense, the unfortunate emperor could not get his project licensed.'

Sensitive as Smollett was, it was criticism of his own work that hurt him, not vulgar abuse by disgruntled authors; and, judging from the vigour of his retorts to the Griffiths and Graingers, he must on the whole rather have enjoyed, so long as his health was fair, the rough and tumble of controversy.

It has been estimated that Smollett's income between 1755 and 1765 averaged about £600 a year. That would have been sufficient, but for the fact that the novelist could never listen to a tale of distress without putting his hand in his pocket. Also, when he was associated with the *Critical Review*, he good-

naturedly kept open house on Sunday for his poorer brethren of the pen. He has himself given in 'Humphry Clinker' a picture of these gatherings at Monmouth House, which so obviously bear the hall-mark of truth—though a little heightened for effect—that some portion of it must be given here. The narrator is Jerry Melford, who spends an evening with his society of authors, all of whom he thought 'seemed to be jealous and afraid of one another'.

'My uncle Bramble was not at all surprised to hear me say I was disappointed in their conversation. "A man may be very entertaining and instructive upon paper", said he, "and exceedingly dull in common discourse. I have observed that those who shine most in private company are but secondary stars in the constellation of genius. A small stock of ideas is more easily managed and sooner displayed, than a great quantity crowded together. There is very seldom anything extraordinary in the appearance and address of a good writer; whereas, a dull author generally distinguishes himself by some oddity or extravagance. For this reason I fancy that an assembly of Crubs must be very diverting."

'So young Melford gets himself taken by his friend Dick Ivy to dine with S——, whom you and I have long known by his writings. He lives in the skirts of the town, and every Sunday his house is open to all unfortunate brothers of the quill, whom he treats with beef, pudding, and potatoes, port, punch, and Calvert's entire butt-beer. He has fixed upon the first day of the week for the exercise of his hospitality, because some of his guests could not enjoy it on any other, for reasons that I need not explain. I was civilly received in a plain, yet decent habitation, which opened backwards into a very pleasant garden, kept in

excellent order; and, indeed, I saw none of the outward signs of authorship, either in the house or the landlord, who is one of those few writers of the age that stand upon their own foundation, without patronage, and above dependence. If there was nothing characteristic in the entertainer, the company made ample amends for his want of singularity.

'At two in the afternoon I found myself one of ten messmates seated at table; and I question if the whole kingdom could produce such another assemblage of originals. Among their peculiarities I do not mention those of dress, which may be purely accidental. What struck me were oddities originally produced by affectation, and afterwards confirmed by habit. One of them wore spectacles at dinner, and another his hat flapped; though, as Ivy told me, the first was noted for having a seaman's eye, when a bailiff was in the wind; and the other was never known to labour under any weakness or defect of vision, except about five years ago, when he was complimented with a couple of black eyes by a player, with whom he had quarrelled in his drink. A third wore laced stockings, and made use of crutches, because once in his life, he had been laid up with a broken leg, though no man could leap over a stick with more agility. A fourth had contracted such an antipathy to the country, that he insisted upon sitting with his back towards the window that looked into the garden; and when a dish of cauliflower was set upon the table, he snuffed up volatile salts to keep him from fainting; yet this delicate person was the son of a cottager, born under a hedge, and had many years run wild among asses on a common. A fifth affected distraction; when spoken to, he always answered from the purpose—sometimes he suddenly started up, and rapped out a dreadful oath—sometimes he burst out a-laughing—

then he folded his arms and sighed—and then he hissed like fifty serpents.

'At first I really thought he was mad, and, as he sat near me, began to be under some apprehensions for my own safety, when our landlord, perceiving me alarmed, assured me aloud, that I had nothing to fear —"The gentleman", said he, "is trying to act a part for which he is by no means qualified—if he had all the inclination in the world, it is not in his power to be mad. His spirits are too flat to be kindled into frenzy. . . ."

'We had the Irish brogue, the Scotch accent, and foreign idiom, twanged off by the most discordant vociferation; for as they all spoke together no man had any chance to be heard, unless he could bawl louder than his fellows. It must be owned, however, that there was nothing pedantic in their discourse, they carefully avoided all learned disquisitions, and endeavoured to be facetious; nor did their endeavours always miscarry. Some droll repartee passed, and much laughter was excited; and if any individual lost his temper so far as to transgress the bounds of decorum, he was effectually checked by the master of the feast, who exerted a sort of paternal authority over this irritable tribe.

'The most learned philosopher of the whole collection, who had been expelled the university for atheism, has made great progress in a refutation of Lord Bolingbroke's metaphysical works, which is said to be equally ingenious and orthodox; but in the meantime, he has been presented to the grand jury as a public nuisance, for having blasphemed in an alehouse on the Lord's day. The Scotchman gives lectures on the pronunciation of the English language, which he is now publishing by subscription.

'My Irishman is a political writer, and goes by the

name of my Lord Potatoe. He wrote a pamphlet in vindication of a minister, hoping his zeal would be rewarded with some place or pension, but finding himself neglected in that quarter, he whispered about, that the pamphlet was written by the minister himself, and he published an answer to his own production. In this he addressed the author under the title of *your lordship*, with such solemnity, that the public swallowed the deceit, and bought up the whole impression. The wise politicians of the metropolis declared, they were both masterly performances, and chuckled over the flimsy reveries of an ignorant garreteer, as the profound speculations of a veteran statesman, acquainted with all the secrets of the Cabinet. The imposture was detected in the sequel, and our Hibernian pamphleteer retains no part of his assumed importance, but the bare title of *my lord*, and the upper part of the table at the potato ordinary in Shoe Lane.'

It is not necessary here to give any further account of the others who were present, but Smollett cannot refrain from a somewhat malicious though almost certainly a veracious, comment of some of those who enjoyed his hospitality:

'I observed that all this appearance of liberality on the side of Mr. S—— was easily accounted for, on the supposition that they flattered him in private, and engaged his adversaries in public; and yet I was astonished, when I recollected that I often had seen this writer virulently abused in papers, poems, and pamphlets, and not a pen was drawn in his defence. "But you will be more astonished", said he, "when I assure you those very guests, whom you saw at his table to-day, were the authors of great part of that abuse; and he himself is well aware of their particular

favours, for they are all eager to detect and betray one another." "But this is doing the devil's work for nothing," cried I. "What should induce them to revile their benefactor without provocation?" "Envy", answered Dick, "is the general incitement; but they are galled by an additional scourge of provocation. S—— directs a literary journal, in which their productions are necessarily brought to trial; and though many of them have been treated with such lenity and favour as they little deserved, yet the slightest censure, such as, perhaps, could not be avoided with any pretensions to candour and impartiality, has rankled in the hearts of those authors to such a degree, that they have taken immediate vengeance on the critic in anonymous libels, letters and lampoons. Indeed, all the writers of the age, good, bad, and indifferent, from the moment he assumed this office, became his enemies, either professed or *in petto*, except those of his friends who knew they had nothing to fear from his strictures; and he must be a wiser man than me, who can tell what advantage or satisfaction he derives from having brought such a nest of hornets about his ears."

'I owned that was a point which might deserve consideration; but still I expressed a desire to know his real motives for continuing his friendship to a set of rascals equally ungrateful and insignificant. He said, he did not pretend to assign any reasonable motive; that, if the truth must be told, the man was, in point of conduct, a most incorrigible fool; that, though he pretended to have a knack at hitting off characters, he blundered strangely in the distribution of his favours, which were generally bestowed on the most undeserving of those who had recourse to his assistance; that, indeed, this preference was not so much owing to a want of discernment, as to want of

resolution, for he had not fortitude enough to resist the importunity even of the most worthless; and as he did not know the value of money, there was very little merit in parting with it so easily; that his pride was gratified in seeing himself courted by such a number of literary dependants; that, probably, he delighted in hearing them expose and traduce one another; and, finally, from their information, he became acquainted with all the transactions of Grub Street, which he had some thoughts of compiling, for the entertainment of the public.

'I could not help suspecting, from Dick's discourse, that he had some particular grudge against S——, upon whose conduct he had put the worst construction it would bear; and by dint of cross-examination, I found he was not at all satisfied with the character which had been given in the *Review* of his last performance, though it had been treated civilly, in consequence of the author's application to the critic. By all accounts, S—— is not without weakness and caprice; but he is certainly good-humoured and civilised, nor do I find, that there is anything over-bearing, cruel, or implacable in his disposition.'

Chapter VIII

1756–1758

Financial Embarrassments—Correspondence with Dr. Macaulay and Dr. John Moore—'The Reprisal'—Smollett and Garrick—Smollett's 'History of England'—Correspondence with Dr. William Hunter—Rev. Thomas Comber—The success of the 'History'—Smollett writes a 'Continuation of the History'—David Hume—Dr. William Robertson.

SMOLLETT'S connection with the *Critical Review* did something to improve his pecuniary position, but evidently, as the following correspondence shows, not nearly enough to set his mind at rest. Indeed, at this period of the eighteenth century periodical writers, even those most in demand, were shockingly underpaid.

Tobias Smollett to Dr. George Macaulay

'Dear Doctor, 'CHELSEA, *April* 6, 1756.

'I have been last week threatened with writs of arrest; and some tradesmen in Chelsea have been so clamorous, that I actually promised to pay them in the beginning of this week. I had recourse to Mr. Rivington [the publisher], who happens to be out of cash, in consequence of breaking up partnership with his brother. My proposal was, that he should advance £100 which I would pay at the rate of four guineas per week, deducted from the History; and

at that rate I should have liquidated the debt in about three-and-twenty weeks. He had no sort of objection to the scheme; and agrees to join with me in security for the money, if it can be borrowed for six months or longer. As he is a sufficient man, and this disgrace hovers over my imagination so as that I shall be rendered incapable of prosecuting my scheme, I have recourse to your advice and assistance. If you can command the sum, the deduction of four guineas per week shall be made into your own hands; and even after payment of that sum I shall go on towards a general clearance, until I am enabled to discuss the rest of my debt to you, by remittances from the West or East Indies. This proposed scheme of liquidation, added to the unquestionable security of Mr. Rivington, and the consideration of my condition, will, I doubt not, prevail upon you to exert yourself in behalf of, dear Sir, yours, etc.

'Ts. Smollett.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'Chelsea, *Aug.* 3, 1756.

'By your asking if I am engaged in any new performance, and immediately after mentioning the *Critical Review*, I conclude you have been told I am concerned in that work. Your information has been true. It is a small branch of an extensive plan which I last year projected for a sort of academy of the Belles Lettres; a scheme which will one day, I hope, be put on execution to its utmost extent. In the meantime the *Critical Review* is conducted by four gentlemen of approved abilities, and meets with a very favourable reception.

'Tho' I never dabble in politics, I cannot help

saying that there seems to have been no treachery in delivering up St. Philip's Fort, nor even in the scandalous affair with the French fleet, which was owing to the personal timidity of our admiral, who is at present the object of the public detestation. Indeed, the people seem to be in a ferment, and there are not wanting rascally incendiaries to inflame their discontent; so that in a populace less phlegmatic the consequences would in all probability be very mischievous.

'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. George Macaulay

'Dear Doctor, 'CHELSEA, *September* 10, 1756.

'The fund which I appropriated for the payment of that note, I have been obliged to pay on another score. I would willingly have concealed the affair from your knowledge, but it must now come out in my own justification. About two years ago, Captain Crawford had a law-suit with his servant about wages, etc. He was bailed by Dr. MacCulloch and me. He left the suit to the care of Adam Gordon, and went to Scotland. Gordon neglected the suit, and judgment being given against the defendant, we, his bail, were obliged to pay damages, costs, etc., to the amount of £95. I drew upon Crawford for the money: after some shuffling he agreed to accept of a bill, payable in eight months. The bill was sent down to him for his acceptance; he never answered the latter. We have instituted a process against him; and were forced to pay the bill, with costs, on its being returned protested. This is the truth, and nothing but the truth. So help me God! The money will be recovered, as he is a man of fortune. In the meantime, I will endeavour to borrow as much as will take up Hamilton's note. If I cannot, and they

should prove troublesome, I must remove to some corner where I may work without being distracted and distressed; for here I can do nothing. I have done very little for these two months past, and am engaged to finish the History by Christmas; so that you may guess my situation. When I sat down to this work I was harassed by duns; I have paid above one hundred pounds of debts, which I could no longer put off, and maintained my family. I have since paid £120 to different tradesmen, from a small remittance which we lately received. I could not have disposed of that money otherwise, without being disgraced. We have granted powers, ample powers, to Tom Bontein to sell our Negroes in the West Indies. He has promised, upon honour, to remit what is already due (amounting to above £1000 sterling) with the first opportunity. We expect daily remittances from the Harvies; and I am determined to make no use of what comes, except for the payment of debts, until the whole are liquidated. You have interposed so often with Mr. Maclean that I am ashamed to mention any expedient of that sort. I have some irons in the fire, for borrowing a little money to satisfy those gentlemen. I have desired my agent to offer any premium rather than be disappointed; and I will let you know the result of his endeavours. I am, as ever, dear Doctor, your most affectionate and much obliged humble servant,

'Ts. Smollett.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. George Macaulay

'Dear Doctor, 'Chelsea, *November* 24, 1756.

'I think I may now with confidence beg your interposition with Mr. Maclean about Hamilton's note, as the farce, which is coming on immediately,

will undoubtedly enable me to discharge that obligation. Just now received an intimation from him, requiring immediate payment, which is as much out of my power as the imperial crown of England. I need say no more, than that I am, dear Sir, yours entirely, 'Ts. Smollett.'

The farce to which Smollett alludes in the last letter, and on which he built high hopes of fortune, was 'The Reprisal, or, The Tars of Old England'. Garrick, who had forgiven or ignored the attacks made upon him by the author, presented it at Drury Lane Theatre on January 22, 1757; but he did not himself play in it, though it is possible that he undertook the production.

The cast is given by Genest in his 'Account of the English Stage':

Heartly (*a gentleman of Dorsetshire, in love with Harriet*) . .	Usher
Brush (*his servant*) . . .	Palmer
Champignon (*commander of a French frigate*)	Blakes
Oclabber (*an Irish lieutenant in the French service*) . . .	Yates
Maclaymore (*a Scotch ensign in the French service*) . . .	Johnson
Lyon (*lieutenant of an English man-of-war*)	Jefferson
Haulyard (*a midshipman*) . .	Beard
Harriet (*a young lady of Dorsetshire, betrothed to Heartly*) . .	Miss Macklin

Genest, after mentioning that the farce was acted several times, summarises it: 'Scene on board a French ship lying at anchor on the coast of Normandy—

Heartly and Harriet are mutually in love—as they were sailing in a pleasure boat they were taken prisoners by Champignon, notwithstanding that no declaration of war had been made—Oclabber and Maclaymore are officers under Champignon—they disapprove of his conduct and assist Heartly in making his escape—Lyon, who is the lieutenant of an English man-of-war, boards Champignon's ship, and sets all to right—the Farce was written by Smollett—it has considerable merit, but it is better calculated for representation than perusal, and for the amusement of the gallery than the pit—it is a very illiberal attack on the French.' 'The Reprisal' may safely be left at that, with the additional statements that it was revived more than once during the latter part of the century, and brought the author about a couple of hundred pounds.

Garrick behaved very handsomely to Smollett, who thereupon reproached himself for having caricatured the actor-manager in 'Roderick Random' and 'Peregrine Pickle', and, hearing from Derrick that persons were misrepresenting him to Garrick, he wrote to him without delay to set matters right between them.

Tobias Smollett to David Garrick

'Dear Sir,

'In justice to myself I take the liberty to assure you that if any person accuses me of having spoken disrespectfully of Mr. Garrick, of having hinted that he solicited for my farce, or had interested views in bringing it forward, he does me wrong, upon the honour of a gentleman. The imputation is altogether false and malicious. Exclusive of other considerations, I could not be such an idiot to talk in that strain, when my own interest required a different sort of conduct. Perhaps the same insidious methods have been taken

DAVID GARRICK

From a Portrait by Batoni

to influence former animosities, which on my part are forgotten and self-condemned. I must own you have acted in this affair of the farce with the candour, openness, and cordiality which even mortify my pride, while they lay me under the most sensible obligations, and I shall not rest satisfied until I have an opportunity to convince Mr. Garrick that my gratitude is at least as warm as any other of my passions.'

David Garrick to Tobias Smollett

'Sir, 'London, *April* 19, 1757.

'Mr. Rivington did me the favour to call upon me last week, and brought me your most obliging present.[1] Let me assure you, that I am truly sensible of your kindness and politeness to me. Though my summer schemes are generally unsettled till I have finished the season at Drury Lane, yet I am now resolved how to spend one part of my vacation, and for which I am most sincerely obliged to Dr. Smollett. I am Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

'David Garrick.'

Author and actor were henceforth on the most friendly terms, and remained so until the end.

David Garrick to Tobias Smollett

'Sir, '*November* 26, 1757.

'There was a mistake made by our office-keepers to your prejudice, which has given me much uneasiness. Though the expense of our theatre every night amounts to £90 and upwards, yet we take no more from gentlemen who write for the theatre, and who produce an original performance than sixty

[1] Probably a copy of the first volume of the History of England.

guineas; they who alter only an old play, pay eighty guineas for the expense, as in the instance of "Amphytrion": this occasioned the mistake which I did not discover till lately. Though it is very reasonable to take fourscore pounds for the expense of the house, yet as we have not yet regulated this matter, I cannot possibly agree that Dr. Smollett shall be the first precedent. I have enclosed a draught upon Mr. Clutterbuck, for the sum due to you. I am, most sincerely,

'Your most obedient, humble servant,

'D. GARRICK.'

When Smollett did the generous thing, he did it in the grand manner. He had been unfair, shamefully unfair to Garrick, and he realised it was up to him to make amends, not once for all but continually. He seized one opportunity when he was writing in the *Critical Review*.

'We often see this inimitable actor, labouring through five tedious acts to support a lifeless piece, with a mixture of pity and indignation, and cannot help wishing there were in this age good poets to write for one who so well deserves them.

Quidquid calcaverit hic rosa fict.

'He has the art, like the Lydian King, of turning all that he touches into gold, and can ensure applause to every fortunate bard, from inimitable Shakespeare and Old Ben, to gentle Neddy Moore [author of "The Gamester"] and [Dr. John Brown] the author of "Barbarossa".'

When years later Garrick sent him a copy of his version of 'A Winter's Tale', Smollett, in acknow-

ledging the gift, referred to what he had written in the History:

'Dear Sir, 'Chelsea, *January* 27, 1761.

'I this morning received your "Winter's Tale", and am agreeably flattered by this mark of your attention.

'What I have said of Mr. Garrick in the History of England [1] was, I protest, the language of my heart. I shall rejoice if he thinks I have done him barely justice. I am sure the public will think I have done no more than justice. In giving a short sketch of the liberal arts, I could not with any propriety, forbear mentioning a gentleman so eminently distinguished by a genius that has no rival. Besides, I thought it was a duty incumbent on me in particular, to make a public atonement in a work of truth for wrongs done him in a work of fiction.

Among other inconveniences arising from ill health, I deeply regret my being disabled from a personal cultivation of your goodwill, and the unspeakable enjoyment I should sometimes derive from your private conversation, as well as from the public exertion of your talents; but sequestered as I am from the world of entertainment, the consciousness of standing well in your opinion will ever afford singular satisfaction to,

'Dear Sir,

'Your very humble servant,

'Ts. Smollett.'

Smollett, since his return from his visit to Scotland, had been busily employed in the composition of his History of England, a task the magnitude of which

[1] *See* p. 197 of this work.

left him little time to correspond even with his most intimate friends.

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'Dear Sir, 'Chelsea, *May* 12, 1757.

'You will forgive me for not having answered your letter sooner, in consideration of the hurry and fatigue to which I have been exposed in bringing out my History of England. I sincerely rejoice in your success in business, as well as in the happiness you seem to enjoy amidst the comforts of matrimony, and I beg leave to make a tender of my best wishes to Mrs. Moore as the source of my friend's happiness.

'The little Irishman, about whom you express some curiosity, was my amanuensis, and has been occasionally employed as a trash reader for the *Critical Review*; but you are not to number him among my companions, nor indeed does his character deserve any further discussion. The bearer, Captain Robert Mann, is my neighbour in Chelsea, and I recommend him to your friendship and acquaintance as a brave, experienced officer, and an honest tar in whom there is no guile. He is appointed Captain of the "Porcupine" sloop, stationed in the Frith of Clyde; and being an utter stranger in that part of the world, you must introduce him to your and my friends in Glasgow, and assist him with your advice and directions. His father was a Scotsman, and I believe a native of your town. My friend Bob has been round the globe with Anson, and proved in fourteen or fifteen sea engagements, during which he behaved with remarkable gallantry; but his good nature is equal to his courage, and indeed, he is the most inoffensive man alive.

'If you want to know how I spend my time in this

retreat, he can satisfy you in that particular, for he has been my Club companion these seven long years.

'Dear John, your affectionate friend and servt.,

'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

The 'Compleat History of England from the descent of Julius Caesar to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748, containing the transactions of one thousand eight hundred and three years', was published in four quarto volumes during 1757 and 1758, and was inscribed to William Pitt:

'Sir, I presume to approach you without the ceremony of a formal introduction: if my intrusion is impertinent, you will punish it by neglect.

'In prefixing your name to my performance, I disclaim all sordid motives. I address myself, not to the minister, but to the patriot. What I offer is not a sacrifice to interest; but a tribute to superior merit. Power and office are adventitious and transitory. They are often vested in the wicked and worthless. They perpetually fluctuate between accident and caprice. To-day, you stand conspicuous at the helm of state: to-morrow, you may repose yourself in the shade of private virtue. My veneration is attached to permanent qualities: qualities that exist independent of favour or of faction: qualities which you can neither forfeit nor resign. I respect those shining talents by which you have distinguished yourself above all your contemporaries. I revere that integrity which you have maintained in the midst of corruption. I appeal to you as a consummate judge of literary merit; as an undaunted assertor of British liberty; as a steady legislator intimately acquainted with the constitution of your country, which you have so nobly defended from encroachment and violation.

'Should the History, I now present, have the good fortune to acquire your approbation, I shall bear, without repining, the insults I may sustain from the virulence of malignant censure. Should it be found altogether unworthy of your notice and regard, it will naturally sink into oblivion. Whatever may be its fate with you, or with the public, I gladly seize this opportunity to declare that I am, with the most perfect esteem and admiration, Sir,

'Your most obedient servant,

'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

The compliment was duly acknowledged:

William Pitt to Tobias Smollett

'WHITEHALL, *May* 15, 1757.

'Sir—After a long disability from the gout in my right arm, I have a particular satisfaction in making this first use of my pen to return you my best acknowledgments for the obliging favour you was so good to send me, and to express the sense I have of that undeserved opinion of me which you have ventured to tell the world you are pleased to entertain. One of the first and most agreeable occupations of my summer's leisure will be the perusal of your volumes; a work which I doubt not will fully answer, with all good judges, the great expectations which the known talents of the writer have so justly raised. I am, with great regard, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, 'W. PITT.'

As the History was composed, as Thomas Seccombe put it happily, at the rate of a century a month, it is evident that it was not based upon first-hand research.

It is, however, pleasantly written in the narrative style and was, on the whole well received, though Lady Mary Wortley Montagu referred to 'my dear Smollett, who, I am sorry to say, disgraces his talent by writing those stupid romances commonly called history'.

Have this from her letters

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'CHELSEA, *June* 4, 1757.

'Dear Sir—I sympathize in your affliction, which I hope has neither been so immoderate nor so unmanly as to hinder you from acting the part of a comforter to the companion of your sorrows. I am pleased with the kind expressions in which you mention my dedication to Mr. Pitt, who has treated me with genuine politeness by which he is as much distinguished in private life as by his superior talents in the service of his country. I am afraid the History will not answer the expectations that seem to be raised among my friends in Scotland. The fourth volume is now in the press, and will (I believe) be published in three months, if no unforeseen accident should intervene.

'You are right in your conjecture with regard to the criticism upon "Douglas" [in the *Critical Review*], which, I assure you, I did not see until it was in print. I did not write one article in that whole number.

'By this time you have (I suppose) received my letter by Capt. Mann, so that you will excuse me from writing at large on this occasion, especially as I am so fatigued with the unintermitting labour of the pen, that I begin to loathe the sight of paper.

'Meanwhile I profess myself your affectionate humble servt.,

'TS. SMOLLETT.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. William Hunter

'Dear Doctor, '*August* 23, 1757.

'I thank you for all your kindness to me, and particularly for the last instance of your warm friendship; and I'm sorry that it must occasion some further trouble. I understand that you propose taking notice of a letter to the author of the *Critical Review*, and I dare say you will do properly. That part of the letter that relates to yourself, I hope, will be flea'd and broil'd alive; for it is damn'd impudent. He pretends it was the writer, not the man, that stuck with him. Your friends and mine say, they think you can, from your own knowledge, contradict him in this. I suppose you know he was sometime (about twelve months, as I have been told) out of his senses, and confined at Edinburgh. Our friends think this would be the best apology you can make to the public for his behaviour.

'As to what relates to me, you are no doubt become a party by your friendly interposition, and therefore I must leave you to judge for yourself what you are to do. I will only, in friendship tell you frankly what I think.

'Firstly, your work does not seem a fit place for handling a physical dispute; it is rather for giving accounts and opinions of things published. Secondly, If you answer this letter by disputation, you must prepare yourself for answering more nonsense of the same kind. He will dispute till he is deprived the use of pen and ink. That's the turn of his madness. Thirdly, All that he has said is so senseless, captious and beastly, that it does not admit of an answer. It is unanswerable. There can be no such thing as convincing one another now. The dispute must be

at an end already with every body that understands the subject, and will give himself the trouble to consider what both have said; and every obstinate fool may insist upon having the last word. Was it my own case only, I give you my word, I would despise it. However, I have made some short observations, to shew you that his last criticisms are without all foundation, and that your friendship for me has not brought you into disgrace with sensible people of the profession. I am, dear Sir, your much obliged and sincere friend,

'T^S. SMOLLETT.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'CHELSEA, *Jan.* 2, 1758.

'I deferred answering your kind letter, until I should have finished my History, which is now completed. I was greatly surprised to hear that my work had met with any approbation at Glasgow, for it was not at all calculated for that meridian. The last volume will, I doubt not, be severely censured by the west country Whigs of Scotland.

'I desire you will divert yourself of prejudices, at least as much as you can, before you begin to peruse it, and consider well the facts before you pass judgment. Whatever may be its defect, I protest before God, I have, as far as in me lay, adhered to truth without espousing any faction, though I own I sat down to write with a warm side to those principles in which I was educated; but in the course of my inquiries some of the Whig ministers turned out such a set of sordid knaves, that I could not help stigmatising them for their want of integrity and sentiment.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'CHELSEA, *September* 28, 1758.

'I sometime ago was favoured with yours, which I should have answered sooner, had I not been extremely busied in correcting my History for a new impression. The task is now finished, and the book, I hope, rendered less unworthy of the public acceptance. I am much obliged to you for the generous warmth with which you have so often interposed on behalf of my reputation; of this, and of every other instance of friendship which I have experienced at your hands, I shall ever retain a cordial remembrance. I am not so much surprised at my book meeting with such censures and enemies in Glasgow, as that it should find any number of friends and favourers.

'I speak not of the few who think like philosophers, abstracted from the notions of the vulgar. The little petulant familiarities of our friend I can forgive, in consideration of the good-will he has always manifested towards me and my concerns. He is mistaken, however, in supposing that I have imbibed priestly notions; I consider the Church not as a religious but a political establishment, so intimately interwoven with our contribution, that the one cannot be detected from the other without the utmost danger of destruction to both.

'The use which our friend[1] makes of the *Critical Review* is whimsical enough; but I shall be glad if he uses it at any rate. I have not had leisure to do much in that work for some time past, therefore I hope you will not ascribe the articles indiscriminately to me;

[1] Dr. Moore's friend was so much enraged at some criticisms in the *Critical Review* that he continued to take it for no other purpose than that he might read all the publications censured by it, and none of those which it praised.

for I am equally averse to the praise and censure that belong to other men. Indeed, I am sick of both, and wish to God my circumstances would allow me to consign my pen to oblivion. I really believe that mankind grow every day more malicious.

'You will not be sorry to hear that the weekly sale of the History has increased to above ten thousand. A French gentleman of talents and erudition has undertaken to translate it into that language, and I have promised to supply him with corrections.'

Smollett, owing to his connection with the *Critical Review*, had made many enemies among the minor fry of men of letters, and these lost no opportunity to come out into the open and disparage his History. Among the most malicious was the Rev. Thomas Comber, who delivered himself of a pamphlet, 'A Vindication of the Great Revolution in 1688 . . . with a confutation of the character of King James the Second as misrepresented by the Author of the Complete History of England'. Smollett was at once up in arms, and published in the *Critical Review* for September a vitriolic retort to Comber and others of his critics:

'Tell me your company, and I'll describe your manners, is a proverbial apothegm among our neighbours; and the maxim will generally hold good; but we apprehend the adage might be more justly turned to this purpose. Name your enemies, and I'll guess your character. If the Complete History of England were to be judged in this manner, we imagine the author would gladly submit to the determination of the public. Let us then see who are the professed enemies of that production: the sage, the patriot, the sedate Dr. Shebbeare: the profound, the candid, the

modest Dr. Hill: the wise, the learned, and the temperate Thomas Comber, A.B., whose performance we are at present to consider. This is indeed a formidable group of adversaries, enough to daunt the heart of any young adventurer in the world of letters, but the author of the Complete History of England has been long familiar with such seas of trouble. The assault, however, which he has sustained from some of those heroes, was not altogether unprovoked. Shebbeare had been chastised in the *Critical Review*, for his insolent and seditious appeals to the public. He took it for granted that the lash was exercised by the author of the Complete History of England: therefore he attacked that performance tooth and nail. He declared that there was neither grammar, meaning, composition or reflection, either in the plan or the execution of the work itself. Griffiths was enraged against the same gentleman, because he was supposed to have set up the *Critical Review*, in opposition to the *Monthly*, of which he [Griffiths] was proprietor; accordingly he employed an obscure grub, who wrote in his garret, to bespatter the History of England. Hill, for these ten years, has, by turns, praised and abused Dr. Smollett, whom he did not know, without being able to vanquish that silent contempt, in which this gentleman ever held him and all his productions: piqued at this indifference and disdain, the said Hill has in a weekly paper, thrown out some dirty insinuations against the author of the Complete History of England.

'We cannot rank the proprietors of R——n, and other histories, among the personal enemies of Dr. Smollett, because they were actuated by the dictates of self-interest, to decry his performance. This, however, they have pursued in the most sordid, illiberal, and ridiculous manner: they have caballed: they have

slandered: they have villified: they have prejudiced, mispresented, and used indue influence among their correspondents in different parts of the kingdom: they have spared neither calumny nor expense, to prejudice the author and his work: they have had the effrontery to insinuate in a public advertisement that he was no better than an inaccurate plagiary from Rapin: and they have had the folly to declare that Rapin's book was the most valuable performance, just immediately after they had taxed Dr. Smollett with having by a specious plan, anticipated the judgment of the public.

'Finally, finding all their endeavours had proved abortive, we have reason to believe they hired the pen of the Rev. Thomas Comber, of York, A.B., to stigmatise and blacken the character of the work which has been to them such a source of damage and vexation. Accordingly, this their champion has earned his wages with surprising eagerness and resolution: he has dashed through thick and thin without fear of repulse; without dread of reputation, indeed he writes with a degree of acrimony that seems to be personal; perhaps, if the truth was known, he would be found one of those obscure authors, who have occasionally received correction in some number of the *Critical Review*, and looks upon Dr. Smollett as the administrator of that correction; but this we only mention as a conjecture. . . .

'Comber very modestly says, he hopes he has kept within the bounds of good breeding, and employed none of that virulence which the *Critical Reviewers* have exercised against the *most respectable characters*. One can hardly refrain from laughing when he reads this declaration. Mr. Comber may always be assured, that it is not in his power to excite resentment. We should be glad, however, to know what those *most*

respectable characters are, that we have treated with indecency. Those *most respectable* personnages are Drs. Shebbeare and Hill, Griffiths and his spouse, a group, to which the Rev. Mr. Comber will make a very proper addition. We think we see the formidable band, forgetting the distinctions sitting in close divan, animated with double pots, encouraged with double pay, by the right worshipful the proprietors of R——n, to renew their attacks against the Complete History of England. We shall prophesy, however, that the author of that work will never deign to take any public notice of what may be advanced against him by writers of that class. He considers them as little inconsiderable curs barking at the moon. Nevertheless, in order to whet their spleen, we will inform the Rev. Mr. Comber, that notwithstanding the uncommon arts, and great expense, with which his honest employers have puffed and advertised his pamphlet, the Complete History of England continues to rise in the estimation of the public; and that above ten thousand numbers of the work are weekly purchased by the subjects of Great Britain, besides those that are sold in Ireland and the plantations.'

The History was undoubtedly a great financial success. Smollett, for his share received about £2000, and his friend Archibald Hamilton, the publisher, made a large fortune out of the venture. The first edition, a very considerable one, was soon sold out, and a second edition, carefully revised, was brought out between 1758 and 1760 in weekly parts, which as the author told Comber and the rest, sold at the rate of ten thousand copies. The revised edition was afterwards sold in eleven octavo volumes.

It may be said, anticipating events, that Smollett engaged himself in writing the ' Continuation of the

Compleat History of England'. This appeared in five octavo volumes between 1763 and 1765: in the next edition (1789) it was described as 'designed as a continuation of Mr. Hume's History'.

The first edition of the 'Continuation' was prefaced by an announcement 'To the Public':

'If the author of the Complete History of England may be allowed to judge from the extraordinary demand for his work, and the sentiments of many persons, for whose opinions he has the utmost deference, this addition will be favourably received, and indeed required by his readers, as a completion of the original plan.

'In this task he has engaged with the greater alacrity, as the subject teems with incidents and events which the historian can record with pleasure, and the reader peruse with peculiar satisfaction.

'The latter part of what has been offered to the public exhibits an unpleasing tissue of misconduct and miscarriage; at home an administration without vigour; abroad, a war without success: in a word, a people groaning under the double pressure of internal discontent and external dishonour. In the period that remains to be discussed, the scene is agreeably changed, and presents such a fortunate assemblage of objects as never occurred in any other era of English history.

'The views of the Crown are at length reconciled to the desires of the people. We see, for the first time, a minister in full possession of popularity, requiring infinitely greater subsidies than ever were exacted under any former reign, since the beginning of the monarchy; and the subjects paying them with cheerfulness, because they confide in the integrity of the administration, and know those liberal aids will be

expended for the honour and advantage of the commonwealth. We also lived to see the fallacy of a pernicious and spurious maxim, adopted by some late ministers, that the machine of government could not be properly moved, unless the wheels were smeared with corruption.

'Our military operations are now planned with so much wisdom and sagacity, and executed with such spirit, as revive the lustre of past ages; and the glory of our late conquests even rivals the renown of those heroic achievements which dignify and adorn the ancient annals of Great Britain. We behold valour tutored by conduct, sentiment united with courage, and the god-like virtues of humanity shining in the midst of slaughter and desolation. What is still more extraordinary, and above all other circumstances redounds to the honour of our national councils, we feel none of those rude tempests that are raised by the furious breath of war. Notwithstanding all the hostile efforts of the most formidable enemy, which discord could have armed against this island, we enjoy the blessings of security and repose, as if we were hedged around by some divinity; and our commerce flourishes undisturbed as in the bosom of peace.

'Themes like these cannot fail to warm the heart, and animate the pen of the historian, who glows with the love of his country. Yet he will carefully avoid the imputation of enthusiasm. In the midst of his transports he hopes to remember his duty and check the exuberance of zeal with the rigid severity of historical truth.

'This is the guiding star by which he hath hitherto steered his dangerous course; the star whose cheering radiance has conducted him safe through the rocks of prejudice and the tides of faction. Guiltless of all connexions that might be supposed to affect his candour, and endanger his integrity, he is determined to proceed

with that fearless spirit of independence, by which he flatters himself the former part of the work hath been remarkably distinguished. Equally incapable of servile complaisance to power, and implicit attachment to particular systems, he will praise without reserve, and blame without apprehension, as often as virtue merits his applause or vice provokes his censure; and the reader shall have no just cause to tax him with having concealed any important blemish or defect even in the most shining character, so far as it falls within the province of history.

'He takes this opportunity of expressing his warmest acknowledgments to those gentlemen who have contributed their advice and assistance towards the execution of this design; and as he is provided with authentic materials for that purpose, he doubts not but that he shall be able to preserve the favour of the public, which he shall always assiduously cultivate, in presenting it with the sequel of a work, which hath surmounted every species of opposition, and acquired some degree of credit, though unowned by patronage and unsustained by party.

'*N.B.* As many anonymous writers have been hired to abuse this work in printed papers and pamphlets, the author takes this opportunity of declaring, that if any person of character in the Republic of Letters shall think proper to censure this history in print, and set his name to his animadversions, he (the author) will answer them to the best of his power; but it cannot be expected that he should employ his time in disputing with obscure, mercenary, and desperate scribblers, who enlist themselves under the banners of malicious interested calumny, and may be said to subsist upon the wages of assassination.'

David Hume was in no doubt as to the success

from the commercial point of view of Smollett's History. 'I am afraid', he wrote to his publisher, Andrew Millar, on April 6, 1758, 'that the extraordinary run upon Dr. Smollett has a little hurt your sales. But these things are only temporary.' What Hume thought of the historical value of Smollett's work may be gathered from a not unkindly ironic reference to it in a letter, dated March 12, 1759, to Dr. Robertson, whose History of Scotland had just appeared: 'A plague take you! Here I sat near the historical summit of Parnassus, immediately under Dr. Smollett, and you have the impudence to squeeze yourself by me, and place yourself direct under my feet.'

Chapter IX

1759–1761

Smollett edits an 'Universal History' and 'The Present State of all Nations'—He is responsible for an English translation of Voltaire's works—Alexander Carlyle—Dr. William Robertson—Admiral Knowles brings a libel action against Smollett—Smollett invites the intercession of John Wilkes—He is sent to the King's Bench Prison—Offered editorship of the British Magazine*—William Pitt—'The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves'—Charles Churchill—George Colman—Smollett lampooned in 'The Apology'.*

SMOLLETT's health was far from good, and the strain of the immense amount of reading and writing he was doing while engaged upon the History affected him considerably. He went to Bath to take the waters, but he could not afford to give himself a long holiday, and was soon back in Chelsea, hard at work.

Tobias Smollett to Dr. George Macaulay

'Dear Doctor, 'CHELSEA, *October* 30, 1759.

'I have had a return of my asthma, in consequence of catching fresh cold, otherwise I would this day wait on you in person. Mr. Jameson, from Brussels, was here, and I asked him if he had received the money for the bill which I drew upon you from Flanders. He answered, that he knew nothing of the matter. I have forgot whether or not you paid it to his correspondent in London. In case you have not,

he goes out of town to-morrow; and I wish that affair was settled, as he has behaved with great friendship and honour on the occasion. He lodges at Mr. Dobbins, upholsterer, in Conduit Street; and I should take it as a particular favour, if you would call upon him. I long to know what steps you have taken with respect to Spain: and am, dear Sir, your much obliged affectionate humble servant, 'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

The reference to Spain in the above letter requires explanation. It would seem to imply that Smollett had invited Dr. Macaulay to write the account of that country for the work he was editing: 'The Modern Part of an Universal History, from the earliest account of Time. Compiled from original writers by the authors of the Ancient Part.' To this, as has been said, he took for his subjects France, Italy, and Germany, and the forty-four volumes of this work appeared between 1759 and 1766. In this arduous task he was assisted by Dr. John Campbell, one of the most voluminous of writers, of whom Johnson spoke complimentarily as 'the richest author that ever grazed the common of literature'. At the same time Smollett was also editing another compilation: 'The Present State of all Nations. Containing a geographical, natural, commercial, and political history of all the countries in the known world.' This saw the light in eight volumes in 1764, and was favourably enough received to be reprinted four years later.

As if this was not enough to keep Smollett engaged up to the hilt—it must be remembered that after the revised edition of his History, he set to work on its Continuation—he made himself responsible for an edition of 'The Works of M. de Voltaire: Translated from the French. With notes historical and

critical ', the first of the thirty-eight volumes appearing in 1761. However, Smollett's share in this task may after all not have been very considerable, for all the volumes, except the first, bear on the title-page in addition to his own, the name of Dr. Thomas Francklin, Greek Professor at Cambridge, well-known miscellaneous writer and a contributor to the *Critical Review*. Smollett had been dead some years when the last volume appeared of the edition of Voltaire's works. So little interest did Smollett take in this elaborate venture that apparently he did not even revise the title-page of the first volume where his name is given as Smollet.

There is an interesting glimpse of Smollett at this time in the Autobiography of Alexander Carlyle when William Robertson paid a visit to London in 1758, and met the novelist for the first time.

' Robertson ', Alexander Carlyle wrote, ' had never seen Smollett, and was very desirous of his acquaintance. By this time the Doctor had retired to Chelsea, and came seldom to town. Home and I, however, found that he came once a week to Forrest's Coffee-house, and sometimes dined there; so we managed an appointment with him on his day, when he agreed to dine with us. He was now become a great man, and being much of a humorist, was not to be put out of his way. Home and Robertson and Smith and I met him there, when he had several of his minions about him, to whom he prescribed tasks of translation, compilation, or abridgment, which, after he had seen, he recommended to the booksellers. We dined together, and Smollett was very brilliant. Having to stay all night, that we might spend the evening together, he only begged leave to withdraw for an hour, that he might give audience to his myrmidons;

we insisted that, if his business [permitted], it should be in the room where we sat. The Doctor agreed, and the authors were introduced, to the number of five, I think, most of whom were soon dismissed. He kept two, however, to supper, whispering to us that he believed they would amuse us, which they certainly did, for they were curious characters. We passed a very pleasant and joyful evening. When we broke up, Robertson expressed great surprise at the polished and agreeable manners and the great urbanity of his conversation. He had imagined that a man's manners must bear a likeness to his books, and as Smollett had described so well the characters of ruffians and profligates, that he must, of course, resemble them.'

From the following letter it is evident that Robertson was pleased with the article in the *Critical Review* for February 1759 on his History of Scotland, in the course of which it is said that he is 'an extremely agreeable writer: his narration is clear, animated, and interesting: his style such as becomes the dignity of history, nervous, regular, chaste, and uniformly supported'.

Dr. William Robertson to Tobias Smollett

'Dear Sir, 'EDINBURGH, *March* 15, 1759.

'Though I have great reason to return you thanks for the genteel and favourable treatment I have met with from the *Critical Reviewers*, and which has been, indeed, no other that I expected from your friendship; yet this is not the chief occasion of my troubling you just now. There was published a few weeks ago a book called "Historical Law Tracts". The author of it is Lord Kames, one of our Judges, a man of great knowledge and worth, and the friend of

every person in Scotland to whom you wish well. I intended (in consequence of a permission which you granted your Scotch friends in your last letter to Carlyle) to have drawn up an article for this book, to be inserted in the *Critical Review*; and I thought myself tolerably qualified for this task by the attention I had been obliged to give to the history and progress of law in this country. But Millar has made so sudden and so violent a demand for a second edition of my own book that I have not had leisure to execute my intention. May I beg that you will either delay this book till the next month, with some general compliment upon it, and that it shall then be considered at large; in which case, I become bound to furnish you with a decent article; or, if such a delay be now improper, let me intreat of you to look at the book, and the article prepared for it, yourself, and to see justice done to the merit of the performance, which I can assure you is very great. I hope you will forgive this freedom, which my zeal for a worthy man, and for an ingenious work, has induced me to take. If you delay considering the book till next month, pray write me of it as soon as possible, that I may prepare for you. Do me the justice to believe, I am with great esteem, dear sir, your affectionate and most obedient servant, 'WILLIAM ROBERTSON.'

William Robertson might be appreciative of the *Critical Review*, but that periodical continued to bring trouble to Smollett with almost every number. In an article which appeared in the issue for May 1758, he made a tremendous onslaught on Vice-Admiral Knowles (afterwards Admiral Sir Charles Knowles, Bart.) in which he made aspersions upon that sailor's courage. Knowles had been with the expedition against Carthagena as surveyor and engineer of the

fleet. It is unlikely that Smollett met him there, but probably he heard a great deal about him. In February 1755 he was second-in-command under Sir Edward (afterwards Lord) Hawke, in the unfortunate expedition against Rochefort. Public feeling in England ran high against the Government, and Knowles came in for a share of the blame. In the course of an article Smollett wrote:

'As to his character, of them who know him, they will not scruple to say, he is an admiral without conduct, an engineer without knowledge, an officer without resolution, and a man without veracity.'

Knowles defended himself in a pamphlet, 'The Conduct of Admiral Knowles on the late Expedition set out in a true light', which was noticed in the *Critical Review* for May 1758 in an article written by Smollett:

'The design of this pamphlet is to vindicate Admiral Knowles from an implicated charge contained in the report of the board of inquiry, concerning the last expedition to the coast of France. It is there said that the design of attacking Fort Tomas was laid aside upon the representations of Vice-Admiral Knowles, that the ship intended for that service was on ground at the distance of four or five miles from the shore. Mr. Knowles has, in our opinion, proved that this ship was actually on shore, as were also the bomb-ketches and the 'Coventry' frigate. It likewise plainly appears that one of these bomb-ketches was actually conducted by the pilot Thierry: that the master of the 'Barfleur' sounded the river Charenti from bank to bank; and that the service was retarded but three hours by Thierry's being sent to chase in the 'Magnanime'.

'He has given us some reasons (though to us not satisfactory) for the fort being built on the shore without gun-shot of the channel; he labours hard to prove that the Fort Tomas was inaccessible by sea; and, with respect to the report of Captain Colby's offering to carry in the 'Princess Amelia', he says, it is a mystery that may be unriddled by a monosyllable, that may be guessed at without explanation. But, after all these demonstrations, we find that no person sounded nearer than three-quarters of a mile of the fort; and whether the channel was not within that distance is still a point far from being ascertained. In the name of Heaven! why was all this space left untried? If the persons employed on this service were afraid of approaching nearer the fort in the day, they might have, with great safety, executed the design in the night. They might have foreseen their omission in this particular would leave the most material point undecided, and consequently subject them to doubts, suspicion, and censure. The most valuable part of this pamphlet is the affixed chart of the road of Basque, with the different soundings of the coast marked by figures.'

Clearly the Admiral could not let such an attack on his professional conduct pass unnoticed, and forthwith he entered a prosecution against Archibald Hamilton, the printer of the *Critical Review*.

Smollett, who always had trouble enough on hand, was anxious that the case should not come into Court.

He was on friendly terms with John Wilkes, who used to visit him at Chelsea and from whom, in fact, he had just begged a favour.

Tobias Smollett to John Wilkes

'CHELSEA, *March* 16, 1759.

'Dear Sir,

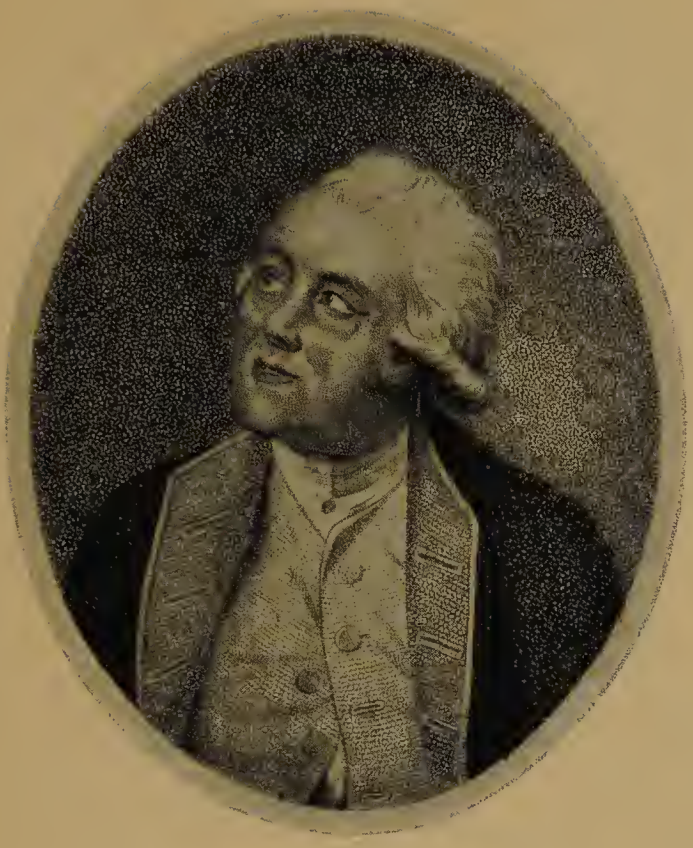
'I am again your petitioner in behalf of the CHAM of Literature, Samuel Johnson. His black servant, Francis Barber, has been pressed on board the 'Star' frigate, Captain Angel; and our lexicographer is in great distress. He says the boy is a sickly lad, of a delicate frame, and particularly subject to a malady in his throat, which renders him very unfit for His Majesty's service. You know what matter of animosity the said Johnson has against you; and I dare say you will desire no other opportunity of resenting it, than that of laying him under an obligation. He was humble enough to desire my assistance on this occasion, though he and I were never cater-cousins; and I gave him to understand that I would make application to my friend Wilkes, who, perhaps, by his interest with Mr. Hay and Mr. Elliot,[1] might be able to procure the discharge of his lacquey. It would be superfluous to say more on the subject, which I leave to your consideration; but I cannot let slip this opportunity of declaring that I am, with the most inviolable esteem and attachment,

'Dear Sir, your affectionate, obliged, humble servant,

'T^S. SMOLLETT.'

Smollett now again wrote to Wilkes, in the hope that he would use his influence to get the Admiral to withdraw the action.

[1] Lords of the Admiralty.



JOHN WILKES

From an Engraving by Freeman
of a Portrait by Zoffani

Tobias Smollett to John Wilkes

'Dear Sir, 'CHELSEA, *March* 24, 1759.

'*Ecce iterum Crispinus!* Your generosity with respect to Johnson shall be the theme of our applause and thanksgiving. I shall be very proud to find myself comprehended in your league offensive and defensive, nay, I consider myself already as a contracting party, and have recourse to the assistance of my allies. It is not, I believe, unknown to you that Admiral Knowles has taken exception at a paragraph in the *Critical Review* of last May, and commenced a prosecution against the printer. Now, whatever termination the trial may have, we shall infallibly be exposed to a considerable expense; and, therefore, I wish to see the prosecution quashed. Some gentlemen, who are my friends, have undertaken to find out, and talk with those who are supposed to have influence with the said Admiral; may I beg the same favour of you? The trial will come on in the beginning of May: and if the affair cannot be compromised, we intend to kick up a dust, and die hard. In a word, if that foolish Admiral has any respect to his own character, he will be quiet, rather than provoke further the resentment of,

'Dear Sir,

'Your very obliged humble servant,

'TS. SMOLLETT.'

Intervention proved unavailing, for Knowles was determined at least to attempt to justify himself.

The trial and its result are thus reported by Dr. John Moore: 'When the cause came to be heard in the Court of King's Bench, it was stated by the Admiral's counsel that it was not with a view to

punish a wretched printer that his client had raised the suit, but to discover who had written the offensive article; that when he should come to the knowledge of the author, if he proved to be a gentleman, another kind of satisfaction would be demanded of him. Dr. Smollett no sooner heard this, than he declared himself the writer of the article in question, and gave the Admiral to understand that he was ready to give him the satisfaction to which his counsel alluded. This declaration, however, had no other effect than that of becoming the foundation of a new prosecution against the Doctor himself, in consequence of which he was fined £100, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment in the King's Bench Prison.'

Life in the King's Bench Prison was not in those days uncomfortable for a man with money in his pocket. He could provide himself with such luxuries as he desired, and it may well have been a haven of rest for an overworked, harassed writer. Visitors were allowed, and amongst those who came to see the novelist were Goldsmith, Garrick, and Wilkes. John Newbery went too, the London bookseller who figures in 'The Vicar of Wakefield' as the publisher of 'The History of Mr. Thomas Trip', the friend of children and of the entire human race.

Newbery was at this time projecting a sixpenny monthly magazine to be started at the beginning of next year. He was in search of an editor. There was of course Goldsmith, with whom he was in close relation; but that genius was too casual for such regular work. The post was offered to Smollett, who accepted it. In January 1760—exactly one hundred years before Thackeray brought out the first number of the *Cornhill Magazine*, with 'Lovel the Widower' as its principal dish—appeared the first number of the *British Magazine*, or, *Monthly*

Repository for Gentlemen and Ladies. . . . Printed for James Rivington and James Fletcher, at the Oxford Theatre, and H. Payne, at Dryden's Head, in Pater-Noster Row.

Smollett secured the necessary royal licence from Pitt, to whom he addressed the following dedication:

'Sir,

'Engaged as your attention must necessarily be with subjects of infinitely higher import, we can hardly hope you will find leisure to cast your eye on this address, which, how insignificant soever it may appear, we take pride in presenting, not as a petition for favour, but as an expression of gratitude for the blessings derived from your administration to the community of which we are members.

'Malice itself must own, that whatever the warmest imagination could suggest; whatever the fondest hope could presage, from your sublime talents and incorruptible integrity; hath been more than realised by your conduct since you charged yourself with the direction of public affairs.

'Endowed by nature with that vigour of mind which constitutes the true basis of magnanimity, and animated with such patriot zeal as would have dignified the first citizen of the Roman republic, you have restored your country to that rank which she ought to maintain among the nations. You have healed her divisions, abolished the distinctions of party, and by your own personal importance, united all your fellow-subjects in one generous and hearty concurrence to support the dignity and prosecute the true interest of the commonwealth.

'You have inspired our councils with courage, fortitude, and wisdom; you have directed our national efforts to the pursuit of true glory and infallible

success. Under the auspices of your Ministry, distinguished above all others for vigilance, steadiness, and foresight, our arms by sea and land are again accustomed to triumph: they have raised immortal trophies in the four divisions of the globe. Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, have in their turns beheld illustrious proofs of British valour; and victory seems to have chosen her station between the knees of our aged Sovereign.

'Embellished with these great and glorious events, this period will, in the annals of Great Britain, shine with unrivalled and unfading lustre. The Administration of PITT, so dear to the present age, which fills our mouths with praise and our hearts with exultation, will become the historian's favourite æra, and prove, to latest posterity, a darling theme of approbation and applause.

'Happy it is for us, that we can thus pour forth the overflowings of our satisfaction, without offering the least violence to truth; without incurring the smallest suspicion of venality or adulation; for, amongst your other attributes, you possess this fortunate peculiarity, that howsoever disappointed ambition may rave, or baffled envy repine in secret, they are forced in public to acknowledge your superior merit, and join aloud in the general voice that proclaims the transcendent virtues of your character.

'We admire that resolution and conduct which you have so conspicuously exerted amidst the tempests of war, and the turmoils of government: but we wish to see you adorned with the garlands of peace, diffusing the blessings of domestic tranquility.

'War, at best, is but a necessary evil; a cruel game of blood, in which even triumph is embittered with all the horrors that can shock humanity: but peace is the gentle calm, in which the virtues of benevolence

are happily displayed; in which those arts which polish and benefit mankind will lift their heads, and flourish under your protection.

'Fired by the enchanting prospect, even we, the lowest votaries of science, presume to offer you this well-intended endeavour to collect and keep alive the scattered seeds of literary improvement; until the genial warmth of your patronage shall invigorate the bloom, and call them forth to a more perfect vegetation.

'We have the honour to be,
'With the most perfect veneration, Sir,
'Your devoted humble servants,
'The Authors of the BRITISH MAGAZINE.'

The first item in the first number of the *British Magazine* was 'The History of Omrah, the son of Abulfaid. An Oriental Tale'. Then came a brief 'Description of a Rattle-snake Plant in Louisiana'; and after this, the star-turn, 'The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves'. This appeared anonymously—or, at least, as 'By the Author of "Roderick Random"'—and ran through the periodical during 1760–1761, appearing in book form immediately after. It is worth noting that in the history of periodicals this is the first instance of a work of fiction being serialised.

When Hazlitt said of 'Sir Launcelot Greaves' that it was 'not worthy of the genius of the author' he must have been in his most urbane mood, for that story is, in very truth, a most pedestrian affair. It centres around, to quote George Saintsbury, 'the preponderous scheme of actual knight-errantry in the middle of the eighteenth century and in England', and it was from the beginning past praying for. One can sympathise with the character in the book who

calls Sir Launcelot 'Don Bethlem', and also with that other character Ferret (said to be intended for Shebbeare), who apostrophises him: 'What! you set up for a modern Don Quixote! The scheme is too stale and extravagant: what was a humorous and well-timed jest in Spain nearly two hundred years ago, will make but a sorry jest, when really acted from affectation, at this time in England.' Ferret is a most unpleasant fellow, but the reader will forgive him much for this remark. Yet, in justice it must be said that the first pages are the best opening of any of Smollett's novels. The inn on the Great North Road and the travellers there assembled in the kitchen is an excellent piece of work: within a few minutes everything is known of the personality of Ferret, the doctor, Crowe, the sailor, and Tom Clarke, the attorney. Later in the book the election scenes are incomparable.

On the other hand, nothing is more tedious than the various adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves, Bart., of Greavesbury Hall, Co. York, in his armour, on his steed Bronzomarte, or of his squire Crabshaw on the back of Gilbert, except perhaps the baronet's courting of Aurelia Darnel, a lady as insipid as any depicted by the author.

Both Smollett and Newbery were desirous to enlist the pen of Goldsmith in the service of the *British Magazine*. Goldsmith was grateful for this recognition of his talents, and in 'The Citizen of the World' he makes Lien Chi Altangi remark that Englishmen have 'many poets in disguise among them, men furnished with that strength of soul, sublimity of sentiment, and grandeur of expression which constitutes the character. . . . Their Johnsons and Smolletts are truly poets, though, for aught I know, they

never made a single verse in their whole lives.' The compliment is obvious and well intentioned. It is strange, however, that Goldsmith should have forgotten that Johnson had written 'London' and 'The Vanity of Human Wishes', and never have heard Smollett talk of 'The Regicide'. 'The History of Mrs. Stanton', which appeared in the *British Magazine*, and is regarded as the genus of 'The Vicar of Wakefield', has generally been attributed to Goldsmith, but Austin Dobson, than whom there was no higher authority on the period, would not accept this view of the authorship.

The editing of the *British Magazine* did not interfere with Smollett's connection with the *Critical Review*, upon which he was hard at work. In 1759 he was looking out for contributors.

Tobias Smollett to Dr. George Macaulay

'Dear Doctor, 'CHELSEA, *December* 14, 1759.

'I am again solicited in behalf of that poor man, Mr. Hamilton. His account is settled to the satisfaction of every body. He wants to go to Scotland; is starving in London, and in danger of being arrested for small debts. He says, if Mr. Maclean will pay the money on the attachment's being laid, he will find sureties for an indemnification. In that case he cannot possibly be a loser. But this man makes me extremely unhappy, and I know you take pleasure in the exercise of benevolence. Besides, Mr. Milne is his creditor, and at present in great want of money for his Christmas payments. He is likewise mine; and if this money can be procured for Mr. Hamilton, he will excuse me for the present. We must therefore once more have recourse to your good offices. Mr. Garrick, in a very civil letter, gave me to understand that it will be proper

to defer the representation of my piece till after the holidays. I have enclosed a begging card belonging to a countryman of ours, one Forbes. The man I know not, but the prize is an elegant book. I am, with glowing gratitude and affection, dear Sir, yours, etc.

'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

'[P.S.] I wish you could get an article for the next number of the *Review*, on painting, statuary, or engraving. What do you think of the Bacchus?

'Upon second thoughts, I have sent you two cards; perhaps Dr. Hunter or Dr. Clephane will take one.'

In the *Critical Review* for April 1761 there was an article on Charles Churchill's poem, 'The Rosciad', which in its consequences caused much annoyance to Smollett. The following passage indicates the general tone of the review:

'The "Rosciad" is a well-written, ill-natured, ingenious, abusive poem; levelled principally against a set of men, whom, as not being able to return the compliment, it was rather ungenerous to attack; namely the inferior players of the two theatres. It may perhaps be a matter of triumph to a young officer to rout these *raggamuffins*, but surely an able general would hardly have thought them worth powder and shot; W——d, H——d, P——r, S——r, A——n, S——h, R——fs, and in short the whole group of second, third, fourth, and fifth-rate actors, are most severely handled, their theatrical faults placed in the most glaring light, and even their *private* foibles malevolently ridiculed and exposed. The observations with regard to their respective merits are, for the most part, just, tho' not new, being indeed no more than the echo of the critics in every coffee-house, put into tolerable good rime. The whole drift of the perform-

ance seems to be plainly and indisputedly this: first, to throw all the players, like so many faggots, into a pile, and set fire to them by way of a sacrifice to the modern Roscius; and secondly to do the same by all the wits and poets of the age, in compliment to *Messieurs Lloyd and Colman*, the heroes of the piece. Mr. G[arrick] is seated between these two gentlemen

like Hercules
Supported by the pillars he had rais'd.

There he receives incense, which they stuff up his nostrils at a most perfuse rate: tho' Mr. G[arrick], after all, wants no such support, nor desires to receive such incense, and is, we doubt not, by this time heartily sick of the perpetual perfume, but it is the fate of theatrical, as of other monarchs, to suffer more flattery, as well as abuse, than all their subjects.'

Tobias Smollett to David Garrick

'*April* 5, 1761.

'I see Mr. Colman[1] has taken offence at the article in the *Critical Review*, which treats of "The Rosciad": and I understand that he suspected me to be the author of that article. Had he asked me the question, I should have freely told I was not the author of that offensive article, and readily contributed to any decent scheme which might have been proposed for his satisfaction; but as he has appealed to the public, I shall leave him and the real author to settle the affair between themselves, and content myself with declaring to you, and that upon my honour, that I did not write one word of the article upon "The Rosciad"; and that I have no ill-will nor envy to Mr. Colman, whom I always respected as a man of genius, and whose

[1] George Colman (1732–1794), dramatist and theatrical manager.

genius I shall always be ready and pleased to acknowledge, either in private or public.

'I envy no man of merit, and I can safely say I do not even repine at the success of those who have no merit. I am old enough to have seen and observed that we are all playthings of fortune, and that it depends upon something so insignificant and precarious as the tossing up of a half-penny, whether a man rises to affluence and honours, or continues to his dying day struggling with the difficulties and disgraces of life. I desire to live quietly with all mankind, and if possible, be upon good terms with all those who have distinguished themselves by their own merit. I must own that if I had examined the articles upon "The Rosciad" before it was sent to the press, I should have put my negative upon some expressions in it, though I cannot see in it any reflection to the prejudice of Mr. Colman's moral character, but I have been so hurried since my enlargement, that I had not time to write one article in the *Critical Review*; except that on Bower's History, and perhaps I shall not write another these six months. That hurry and a bad state of health have prevented me from returning the visit you favoured me with in the King's Bench. I beg you will accept this letter in lieu of it, and believe me, that no man respects Mr. Garrick more than he is respected by his humble servant,

'T^s. SMOLLETT.'

Whether Churchill believed the denial or not, he still held Smollett responsible for the insertion of the objectionable article, and he made a vigorous onslaught on him in 'The Apology'.

> When first my muse, perhaps more bold than wise,
> Bade the rude trifle into light arise,
> Little she thought such tempests would ensue;
> Less, that those tempests would be raised by you.

The thunder's fury rends the towering oak,
Rosciads, like shrubs, might 'scape the fatal stroke.
Vain thought! a critic's fury knows no bound,
Drawkansir-like, he deals destruction round;
Nor can we hope he will a stranger spare,
Who gives no quarter to his friend Voltaire.

. . . . . .

Who ever read 'The Regicide', but swore
The author wrote as never man before?
Others for plots and under-plots may call,
Here's the right method—have no plot at all.
Who can so often in his cause engage
The tiny pathos of the Grecian stage,
Whilst horrors rise, and tears spontaneous flow
At tragic Ha! and no less tragic Oh!
To praise his nervous weakness all agree,
And then for sweetness, who so sweet as he!
Too big for utterance when sorrows swell,
The too big sorrows flowing tears must tell;
But when those flowing tears shall cease to flow,
Why—then the voice must speak again, you know.

. . . . . .

Is there a man, in vice and folly bred,
To sense of honour as to virtue dead,
Whom ties nor human nor divine can bind,
Alien from God, and foe to all mankind;
Who spares no character, whose every word,
Bitter as gall, and sharper than the sword,
Cuts to the quick; whose thoughts with rancour swell;
Whose tongue on earth performs the work of hell;
If there be such a monster, the Reviews
Shall find him holding forth against abuse.

Nor did Churchill spare Archibald Hamilton:

To Hamilton's the ready lies repair—
Ne'er was lie made which was not welcome there—
Hence, on maturer judgment's anvil wrought,
The polished falsehood's into public brought.
Quick circulating slanders mirth afford
And reputation bleeds in every word.

Churchill more than once returned to the attack

on Smollett. He introduced him in 'The Author' as Publius,

> Too mean to have a foe—too proud to have a friend.

Again, in 'The Ghost' Churchill refers to Smollett by name and made gross allusion to the convulsive disorder to which Dr. Johnson was subject. Attacking the Pensioners he says:

> Others, *half-palsied* only, mutes become,
> And what made Smollett write makes Johnson dumb.

He was not the less bitter because when these last were written Smollett and Wilkes, with the latter of whom the poet was associated, were in controversy, the *Briton* against the *North Briton*.

Chapter X

1762–1765

Smollett edits the Briton*—Wilkes retorts with the* North Briton *—The friendship between them snaps—Smollett caricatured—The* Briton *fails—'No. 45'—The death of Smollett's daughter, Elizabeth—Ill-health—He and his wife go abroad—'Continuation of the History of England' —He makes the* amende honorable *therein to Garrick, Quin, Lyttelton, and others—In France—His grievances when travelling—Dr. Alexander Reid—Sterne's attack on 'Smelfungus'—Smollett's criticism of France and the French—The Rue Smolett at Nice—The Smolletts return to England.*

LIFE was to become yet more uncomfortable for Smollett. After the resignation of Pitt from the Cabinet in October 1761, Bute, who a few months earlier had become Secretary of State for the Northern Department and sat in the House of Lords as a representative Scotch peer, found his political credit with the nation at a very low ebb. He was attacked in Parliament and out of it, and he looked for some way in which to reply to his numerous enemies. He decided to finance a paper, and the editorship was offered to and accepted by Smollett. The paper was called the *Briton*, and the first number appeared on May 30, 1762. It was written in the vigorous controversial style fashionable in that day.

John Wilkes, who, of course, was against the Government, on hearing of Smollett's undertaking

was, at first, complimentary to the editor. 'It would seem', he said, 'that Bute, after distributing all the places under government to his adherents, is determined to monopolise the wit also.' Nevertheless, after the appearance of the second number of the *Briton*, he, with the assistance of Charles Churchill, entered the lists on behalf of the popular party on June 5 with the *North Briton*, a publication that was to make history.

The friendship of Smollett and Wilkes had endured until this time, and each had a respect for the other's talents.

Tobias Smollett to John Wilkes

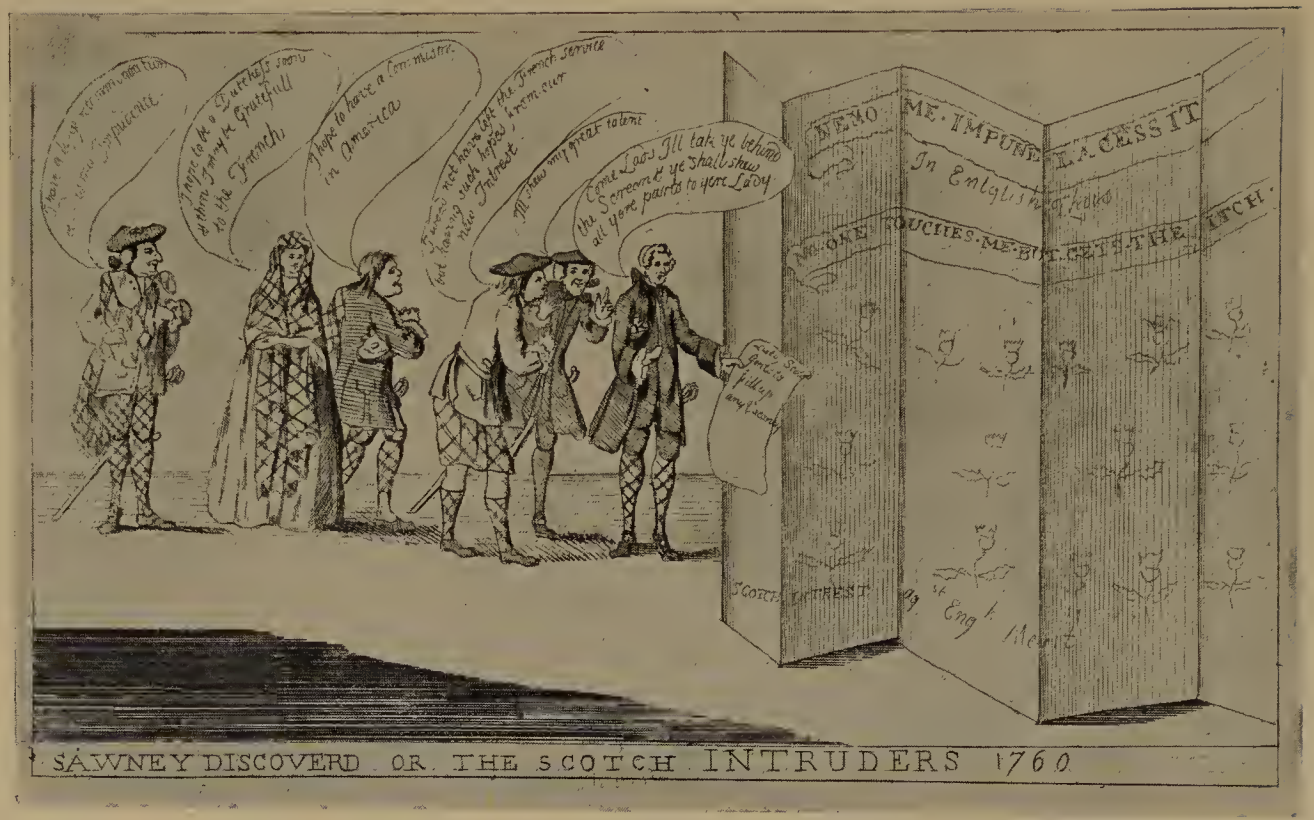
'Dear Sir, 'CHELSEA, *March* 28, 1762.

'My warmest regard, affection, and attachment, you have long secured, my secrecy you may depend upon. When I presume to differ from you in any point of opinion, I shall always do it with diffidence and deference.

'I have been ill these three months; but hope soon to be in a condition to pay my respects to Mr. Wilkes in person. Meanwhile I must beg leave to trouble him with another packet, which he will be so good as to consecrate at his leisure. That he may continue to enjoy his happy flow of spirits, and proceed through life with a full sail of prosperity and reputation, is the wish, the hope, and the confident expectation, of his much obliged, humble servant,

'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

The friendship, indeed, was not broken for a while after the foundation of the papers; but faction ran high, and presently it snapped—never to be repaired. Smollett could not tolerate the ironical references to the Scotch which appeared in the *North Briton*, and


I hope to be a Commissary
I hope to be a Lieutenant
I hope to have a Commission in America
I have not been at the French service but knowing such hopes in Ireland
I'll show my great talent
Come Law, I'll take ye behind the Screen & ye shall shew all your pairts to your Lady
NEMO ME IMPUNE LACESSIT
In English
MOE TOUCHES ME BUT GETS THE ITCH
SCOTCH INTEREST
of Engd
SAWNEY DISCOVERD OR THE SCOTCH INTRUDERS 1760

A CARICATURE

his articles became more and more vitriolic. How, indeed, could Wilkes remain on good terms with the man who wrote of him in the *Briton* on January 1, 1763:

'I would ask if common honesty can reside in the breast which is consecrated to falsehood and dissimulation?—if one virtue of humanity can warm the breast that swells with perfidy, with hatred, with unprovoked revenge?—or if the duties of a good citizen can ever be performed by the hired voluntary instrument of sedition? No! such a caitiff should not escape unpunished: he does not deserve to enjoy the protection of the law; he does not deserve to breathe the air of heaven, but ought to be exiled from every civilised society.'

But, if Wilkes was a 'hired voluntary instrument', what else was Smollett, who most certainly was not writing for love, even though he may have believed thoroughly in the cause he championed so vigorously?

This was the most unfortunate business upon which Smollett ever embarked, and the year during which he conducted the *Briton* brought him more annoyance and pain than anything else in his life. Shortly after the appearance of the paper, there appeared a most vicious caricature, styled 'The Mountebank'. In this Bute, represented as a quack-doctor, is extolling his gold-pills, while Smollett, in the guise of a mountebank, with the *Briton* under his arm and the *North Briton* under his feet, is drawing the attention of the crowd. A female figure in the background is clearly intended for the Dowager Princess of Wales. The following dialogue takes place:

Smollett: 'By my saul, laddies, I tell ye truly I went round about, and I thank my geud stars, I found a passage through Wales, which conducted me to aw

the muckle places in the land, where I soon got relief, and straightway commenced doctor for the benefit of mysel and countrymen. See here, my bra' lads, in these bags are contained the gowden lozenges, a never-failing remedy, that gives present ease famous throughout the known world for their excellent quality. Now, as ye are a' my countrymen, and stand in the most need of a cure, I will gie every mon o' ye twa or three thousand of these lozenges once a year, to make ye hauld up your heads and turn out muckle men.'

Bute: 'Awa wi' ye to the deel ye southern loons; but aw ye bonny lads fra the north o' Tweed, mak haste and come to me, I am now in a capacity to gie ye aw relief, I ken fu' weel your distemper—I donna mean that so peculiar to our country, occasion'd by the immoderate use of oatmeal. But it is the gowden itch wi' which ye are troubled (and in truth, most folk are) that I learnt the art to cure. I mysel was ne'er fra' from this muckle itch, while I liv'd in the North, but having a geud staff to depend upon, I resolved to travel into the South to seek a cure.'

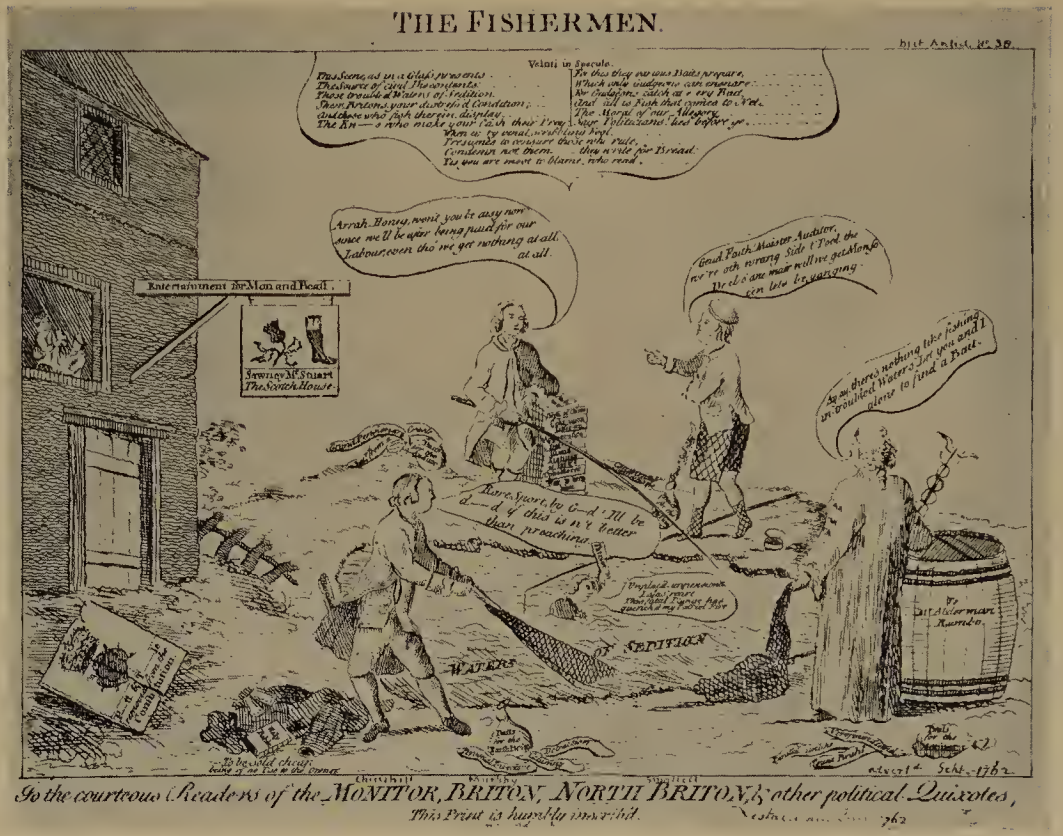
The *Briton* was not a success; its circulation never exceeded two hundred and fifty copies a week; and its last number appeared on February 12, 1763. The famous 'No. 45' brought the career of the rival paper to an end.

During this time Smollett was becoming pessimistic about his health.

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'Chelsea, *June* 1, 1762.

'I am much affected by your kind concern for my health, and believe the remedy you propose might


THE FISHERMEN.
Velati in Speculo.
Arrah Honey, wont you be asky now since we'll be after being paid for our Labour even tho' we get nothing at all.
Entertainment for Man and Beast.
Sawney Mr Stuart
The Scotch House
Good Faith Master Auditor, we're oth wrong Side t'Post the Books are made well we get Money in bote by swaying
Ay ay there's nothing like fishing in troubled Waters, but you and I alone to find a Boat.
Hang Sport, by G—d 'Tis all of this is nt better than preaching
WATERS
OF SEDITION
To be sold cheap
Dall Alderman Kumbo
Go the courteous Readers of the MONITOR, BRITON, NORTH BRITON, & other political Quixotes,
This Print is humbly inscribed.

A CARICATURE

have a happy effect; but it must be postponed. To tell you the truth, I have a presentiment that I shall never see Scotland again. Be that as it may, I shall ever retain for it a regard which is truly filial.

'I have had no attack of asthma those two months; but I am extremely emaciated; and am afflicted with a tickling catarrh, and cough all night without ceasing. My appetite holds good; my spirits are tolerable, and I believe I might retrieve my constitution by a determined course of exercise and the cold bath; but neither my indolence nor my occupation will permit me to persevere in these endeavours.—Your affectionate and very humble servt., 'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

In 1763, the year which saw the abandonment of the publication of the *Briton*, occurred a tragedy in the domestic life of Smollett. His daughter, Elizabeth, died of consumption in April at the age of fifteen. After he had seen her buried on the eleventh day of that month at St. Luke's, Chelsea, he gave himself up to grief. He had been devotedly attached to her, and she had been his principal, perhaps his only, joy in life. 'Many a time did I stop my task', he said in one of his letters, 'and betake me to a game of romps with Betty, while my wife looks on smiling, and longing in her heart to join in the sport; then back to the cursed round of duty.'

His health entirely broke down. Dr. Armstrong, who was a frequent visitor to Monmouth House, counselled him to have recourse again to the Bath waters, from the use of which he had received great benefit the preceding winter, 'but', said Smollett, 'I have many inducements to leave England'. 'My wife', he added, 'earnestly begged I would convey her from a country where every object served to nourish her grief: I was in hopes that a succession of

new scenes would engage her attention, and gradually call off her mind from a series of painful reflections ; and I imagined the change of air, and a journey of near a thousand miles, would have a happy effect upon my own constitution.' Also, in his state of health he had not the temper for continuous controversy, and he was suffering from disappointment that nothing had been done for him, other than his salary, in return for his services to Lord Bute and his party.

'You knew and pitied my situation, traduced by malice, persecuted by faction, abandoned by false patrons, and overwhelmed by the sense of a domestic calamity, which it was not in the power of fortune to repair,' he wrote, presumably to Dr. Armstrong. 'You know with what eagerness I fled from my country as a scene of illiberal dispute and incredible infatuation, where a few worthless incendiaries had, by dint of perfidious calumnies and atrocious abuse, kindled up a flame which threatened all the horrors of civil dissension.'

Yet in spite of his many distresses, Smollett before his departure made a *beau geste* that showed the best side of him. He inserted in the last volume of the Continuation of the History of England a chapter on the arts during the reign of George II, and therein paid tribute and made amends to those of his contemporaries whom he had at different times attacked, and paid compliments to rival historians and novelists:

'Genius in writing spontaneously arose, and though neglected by the great, flourished under the culture of a public which had pretensions to taste, and piqued itself in encouraging literary merit. Young still survived, a venerable monument of poetical talents. Thomson, the poet of the seasons, displays a luxuriancy

of genius in describing the beauties of nature. Akenside and Armstrong excelled in didactic poetry. Even the epopœia did not disdain an English dress, but appeared to advantage in the "Leonidas" of Glover, and the "Epigioniad" of Wilkie. The public acknowledged a considerable share of merit in the tragedies of Young, Mallet, Home, and some other less distinguished authors. Very few regular comedies, during this period, were exhibited on the English theatre, which, however, produced many less laboured pieces, abounding with satire, wit, and humour. "The Careless Husband" of Cibber, and "The Suspicious Husband" of Hoadly, are the only very modern comedies that bid fair for reaching posterity.

'The exhibitions of the stage were improved to the most exquisite entertainment, by the talents and management of Garrick, who greatly surpassed all his predecessors of this and, perhaps, every other nation, in his genius for acting, in the sweetness and variety of his tones, the irresistible magic of his eye, the fire and vivacity of his action, the elegance of attitude, and the whole pathos of expression. Quin excelled in dignity and declamation, as well as in exhibiting some characters of humour equally exquisite and peculiar. Mrs. Cibber breathed the whole soul of female tenderness and passion, and Mrs. Pritchard displayed all the dignity of distress.

'That Great Britain was not barren of poets at this period, appears from the detached performances of Mason, Gray, the two Whiteheads, and the two Wartons, besides a greater number of other bards, who have sported in lyric poetry. Candidates for literary fame appeared in the higher spheres of life, embellished by the nervous style and extensive erudition of a Corke, by the delicate taste, the polished muse, and tender feelings of a Lyttelton!

'Even the female sex distinguished themselves by their taste and ingenuity. Miss Carter rivalled the celebrated Dacier in learning and critical knowledge; and Mrs. Lennox signalized herself by many successful efforts of genius, both in poetry and prose. The field of history and biography was cultivated by many writers of ability, among whom we distinguish the copious Guthrie, the circumstantial Ralph, the laborious Carte, the learned and elegant Robertson, and, above all, the ingenious, penetrating, and comprehensive Hume, whom we rank with the first writers of the age both as historian and philosopher. Nor let us forget the merit conspicuous in the works of Campbell, remarkable for candour, intelligence, and precision. Johnson, inferior to none in philosophy, philology, poetry, and classical learning, stands foremost as an essayist, justly admired for the dignity, strength, and variety of his style, as well as for the agreeable manner in which he investigates the human heart, tracing every interesting emotion, and opening all the sources of morality. The genius of Cervantes was transfused into the novels of Fielding, who painted the characters, and ridiculed the follies of life, with equal strength, humour, and propriety. The laudable aim of enlisting the passions on the side of virtue was successfully pursued by Richardson in his "Pamela", "Clarissa", and "Grandison", a species of writing equally new and extraordinary; where, mingled with much superfluity and impertinence, we find a sublime system of ethics, an amazing knowledge and command of human nature.'

Smollett, with his wife and three others, set out at the end of June (1765) for Boulogne, where they stayed throughout the summer, firstly, because Smollett found the heat too excessive for travelling in warm climates, and, secondly, because he proposed 'to bathe

in the sea, with a view to strengthen and prepare my body for the fatigues of such a long journey '.

Clearly, he acted as his own physician:

' I am much obliged to you for your kind enquiries after my health, which has lately been in a very declining condition,' he wrote to a medical friend. ' In consequence of a cold, caught a few days after my arrival in France, I was seized with a violent cough, attended with a fever, and stitches in my breast, which tormented me all night long without ceasing. At the same time I had a great discharge by expectoration, and such a dejection of spirits as I never felt before. In this situation I took a step which may appear to be desperate. I knew there was no imposthume in my lungs, and I supposed the stitches were spasmodical. I was sensible that all my complaints were originally derived from relaxation. I therefore hired a chaise, and going down to the beach, about a league from the town, plunged into the sea without hesitation. By this desperate remedy, I got a fresh cold in my head; but my stitches and fever vanished the very first day; and by a daily repetition of the bath, I have diminished my cough, strengthened my body, and recovered my spirits. I believe I should have tried the same experiment, even if there had been an abscess in my lungs, though such practice would have been contrary to all the rules of medicine; but I am not one of those who implicitly believe in all the dogmata of physic. . . . I myself drank the waters of Bath, and bathed, in diametrical opposition to the opinion of some physicians there settled, and found myself better every day, notwithstanding their unfavourable prognostic. If I had been of the rigid fibre, full of blood, subject to inflammation, I should have followed a different course.'

Smollett started from London in his most querulous mood. He distributed abuse impartially. It is unquestionably true that there was enough of justice in his many complaints, yet unconsciously he made it a point to look at the black side of things. He does, indeed, at times admit his bad temper. 'The truth is,' he says, 'I was that day more than usually peevish, from the bad weather as well as from the dread of a fit of asthma, with which I was threatened. But I daresay, my appearance seemed as uncouth to him as his travelling dress appeared to me. I had a grey mourning frock under a wide greatcoat, a bob-wig without powder, a very large laced hat, and a meagre, wrinkled, discontented countenance.

'A man who travels with a family of five people may lay his account with a number of mortifications,' he says in the first letter he wrote from Boulogne. His first grievances arose on the journey to Dover:

'I need not tell you this is the worst road in England, with respect to the conveniences of travelling, and must certainly impress foreigners with an unfavourable opinion of the nation in general. The chambers are in general cold and comfortless, the beds paultry, the cookery execrable, the wine poison, the attendance bad, the publicans insolent, and the bills extortion; there is not a drop of tolerable malt liquor to be had from London to Dover.

'Every landlord and every waiter harangued upon the knavery of a publican in Canterbury, who had charged the French Ambassador forty pounds for a supper that was not worth forty shillings. They talked much of honesty and conscience; but when they produced their own bills, they appeared to be all of the same family and complexion. If it was a reproach upon the English nation, that an innkeeper

should pillage strangers at that rate; it is a greater scandal that the same fellow should be able to keep his house still open.

'Dover is commonly called a den of thieves; and I am afraid it is not altogether without reason it has acquired this appellation. The people are said to live by piracy in time of war; and by smuggling and fleecing strangers in time of peace: but I will do them the justice to say, they make no distinction between foreigners and natives. Without all doubt, a man cannot be much worse lodged and worse treated in any part of Europe, nor will he in any other place meet with more flagrant instances of fraud, imposition, and brutality. One would imagine they had formed a general conspiracy against all those who either go to or return from the continent.'

Landlords, it may be mentioned, were a nightmare to Smollett all the time he was abroad, and in his correspondence he is always grumbling at the charges for lodging and food. Again and again he attacked them.

From Paris he wrote:

'I have one thing very extraordinary to observe of the French auberges, which seems to be a remarkable deviation from the general character of the nation. The landlord, hostesses, and servants of the inns upon the road, have not the least dash of complaisance in their behaviour to strangers. Instead of coming to the door, to receive you as in England, they take no manner of notice of you; but leave you to find or to inquire your way to the kitchen, and there you must ask several times for a chamber, before they seem willing to conduct you up stairs. In general, you are served with the appearance of the most

mortifying indifference, at the very time they are laying schemes for fleecing you of your money. It is a very odd contrast between France and England; in the former all the people are complaisant but the publicans; in the latter there is hardly any complaisance but among the publicans. When I said all the people in France, I ought also to except those vermin who examine the baggage of travellers in different parts of the kingdom. Although our portmanteaus were sealed with lead, and we were provided with a *passe avant* from the *douane*, our coach was searched at the gate of Paris by which we entered; and the women were obliged to get out, and stand in the open street, till this operation was performed.'

At Brignolles, feeling sure that he was being overcharged, he appealed to the Civil Authority:

'We were ushered into the common eating-room, and had a very indifferent dinner; after which I sent a louis d'or to be changed, in order to pay the reckoning. The landlord, instead of giving the full change, deducted three livres a head for dinner, and sent in the rest of the money by my servant. Provoked more at his ill manners, than at his extortion, I ferreted him out of a bed-chamber, where he had concealed himself, and obliged him to restore the full change, from which I paid him at the rate of two livres a head. He refused to take the money, which I threw down on the table; and the horses being ready, stepped into the coach, ordering the postillions to drive on. Here I had certainly reckoned without my host. The fellows declared they would not budge, until I should pay their master; and as I threatened them with manual chastisement they alighted and disappeared in a twinkling. I was now

so incensed, that though I could hardly breathe, though the afternoon was far advanced, and the street covered with wet snow, I walked to the consul of the town, and made my complaint in form. This magistrate, who seemed to be a tailor, accompanied me to the inn, where by this time the whole town was assembled, and endeavoured to persuade me to compromise the affair. I said, as he was the magistrate, I would stand to his award. He answered, "that he would not presume to determine what I was to pay". I have already paid him a reasonable price for his dinner (said I), and now I demand post-horses according to the king's ordonnance. The aubergiste said the horses were ready, but the guides were run away; and he could not find others to go in their place. I argued with great vehemence, offering to leave a louis d'or for the poor of the parish, provided the consul would oblige the rascal to do his duty. The consul shrugged up his shoulders, and declared it was not in his power. This was a lie, but I perceived he had no mind to disoblige the publican. If the mules had not been sent away, I should certainly have not only paid what I thought proper, but corrected the landlord into the bargain for his insolence and extortion; but now I was entirely at his mercy, and as the consul continued to exhort me in very humble terms, to comply with his demands, I thought proper to acquiesce. Then the postillions immediately appeared: the crowd seemed to exult in the triumph of the aubergiste; and I was obliged to travel in the night, in very severe weather, after all the fatigue and mortification I had undergone.'

That prices were raised in the different towns at the appearance of visitors is not to be denied, but experienced travellers were accustomed to this, and

knew that protest was unavailing. It must be remembered that this was the day of the Grand Tour, and that every Briton was assumed to be a lord and expected to be wealthy. The trouble was that Smollett was doing what was regarded as a luxury with a minimum of money at his command. He may well have been unaware of how much expense he was incurring when he made up his mind to undertake what was then an extensive travel. To give one instance:

'In England you know I should have had nothing to do, but hire a couple of post-chaises from stage to stage, with two horses in each; but here the case is quite otherwise. The post is farmed from the King who lays travellers under contribution for his own benefit, and has published a set of oppressive ordonnances, which no stranger nor native dares transgress. The postmaster finds nothing but horses and guides: the carriage you yourself must provide. If there are four persons within the carriage you are obliged to have six horses and two postillions; and if your servant sits on the outside, either before or behind, you must pay for a seventh. You pay double for the first stage from Paris, and twice double for passing through Fontainebleau when the Court is there, as well as at coming to Lyons, and at leaving this city. These are called Royal Posts, and are undoubtedly a scandalous imposition.'

One of Smollett's annoyances on his arrival at Boulogne was that the books he had brought with him were seized and sent to Amiens at his expense 'to be examined by the *chambre syndicale*, lest they should contain something prejudicial to the State or to the religion of the country'. 'This', he said

bitterly, 'is a species of oppression which one would not expect to meet with in France, which piques itself on its politeness and hospitality: but the truth is, I know no country in which strangers are worse treated, with respect to their essential concerns.'

It was not until late in August that his books were restored to him, and then only 'by virtue of a particular order to the Director of the *douane*, procured by the application of the English resident to the French Ministry'.

In his correspondence there are many references to his health, and he speaks of it in a letter written to Dr. Alexander Reid of Paradise Row, Chelsea, who in 1764 edited the 'Elements of Surgery' of Samuel Miklis, and probably was Smollett's medical adviser.

Tobias Smollett to Dr. Alexander Reid

'Dear Sir, 'Boulogne, *August* 3, 1763.

'Your obliging letter was doubly acceptable; both for the entertainment I received from it, and as it convinced me that I am still remembered with regard by my old friends in Chelsea. Indeed, I cannot help respecting Chelsea as a second native place, notwithstanding the irreparable misfortunes which happened to me while I resided in it, I mean the loss of my health, and of that which was dearer to me than health itself, my darling child, whom I cannot yet remember with any degree of composure.

'With respect to my constitution, I have lost ground since I left England. I now bathe in the sea; and shall in ten days or a fortnight, set out for Nice in Provence, a journey of eight hundred and sixty-four miles. This is my last stake; and if it does not answer, I must give up all thoughts of ever seeing my

friends in England—when there is no remedy we must submit. Before I arrived in France I thought the climate of England was the most disagreeable on the face of the earth, but here it is a thousand times more vexatious, more variable, and more inclement. I am very glad to hear your concert was so brilliant; and I hope all your Chelsea Societies will continue to flourish. I understand there is a Lodge of French Freemasons at Boulogne; but I am not well enough to visit them.

'I am much mortified that my ill-health will not permit me to enjoy a bottle of good claret which I have at the rate of fifteen pence sterling. In Languedoc I can have it for the fifteenth part of that sum.

'The season here is very backward. Green geese, soles, and turbot are just come in; there is not an apricot ripe within three leagues of Boulogne. However, the rye harvest is begun, and in ten days they will cut down their wheat.

'Everything here is done in a clumsy and slovenly manner, which is very disagreeable and even shocking to those accustomed to English neatness; and there is a total want of delicacy in the manners of the people. They are generally civil, but they have no sentiment; and their ignorance and superstition put me out of all patience.

'My wife, who enjoys pretty good health, joins me in my best respects to Mrs. Reid, and in best wishes for your children, who are by this time, I hope, quite recovered of the whooping-cough. I pray God they may live to be a comfort to you both; and that you may never feel the pangs of that unspeakable grief which the loss of a beloved child inspires.

'Pray remember me to my good friends, Messrs. Wilton and Russell, and to all our Brotherhood at the Swan. When you see Halford, tell him I am surprised

he never answered my letter; and believe me to be, with great truth and affection,

'Dear Sawney,

'Your sincere friend and humble servt.

'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

Smollett and his party were in Paris early in October, and, after a few days' stay, went to Lyons, *en route* for Montpellier, which was reached at the beginning of November.

At Montpellier Smollett made the acquaintance of Laurence Sterne and his wife and daughter. The author of 'Tristram Shandy', himself a sick man, and not averse from airing his own ailments, was irritated by the complaints of his fellow-invalid, and, after reading Smollett's 'Travels through France and Italy' attacked him bitterly, as Smelfungus in 'A Sentimental Journey'.

Smollett, who could at this time find cause for admiration scarcely in anything, subsequently wrote in his book of travels:

'I was most disappointed at sight of the Pantheon, which, after all that has been said of it, looks like a huge cockpit, open at top. . . . I cannot help thinking that there is no beauty in the features of Venus, and that the attitude is awkward and out of character. . . . Thus have I given you a circumstantial detail of my Italian expedition, during which I was exposed to a great number of hardships, which I thought my weakened condition could not have borne, as well as to violent fits of passion . . . insomuch that I may say I was for two months continually agitated either in mind or body, and very often both at the same time.'

To this Sterne retorted:

'I pity the man who can travel from Dan to Beersheba, and cry "'Tis all barren"—and so it is; and so is all the world to him who will not cultivate the fruit it offers. I declare, said I, clapping my hands cheerily together, that was I in a desert, I would find out wherewith in it to call forth my affection. . . . The learned SMELFUNGUS travelled from Boulogne to Paris—from Paris to Rome—and so on—but he set out with the spleen and the jaundice, and every object he passed by was discoloured or distorted.—He wrote an account of them, but 'twas nothing but the account of his miserable feelings.

'I met Smelfungus in the grand portico of the Pantheon—he was just coming out of it—"*'Tis nothing but a huge cockpit*," said he. "I wish you had said nothing worse of the Venus of Medicis," replied I—for in passing through Florence, I had heard he had fallen foul upon the goddess, and used her worse than a common strumpet, without the least provocation in nature.

'I popp'd upon Smelfungus again at Turin, in his return home; and a sad tale of sorrowful adventures he had to tell, "wherein he spoke of moving accident by flood and field, and of the cannibals which each other eat: the Anthropophagi"—he had been flay'd alive, and bedivil'd, and used worse than St. Bartholomew; at every stage he had come at.

'"I'll tell it", cried Smelfungus, "to the world." "You had better tell it", said I, "to your physician."'

Smollett was indeed always looking out for what he could regard as absurd. Starting out with a strong anti-French bias, he never misses an opportunity to ridicule the people and their customs; but it must be admitted that he was not averse from poking fun at those at home:

'In the character of the French, considered as a people, there are undoubtedly many circumstances truly ridiculous. You know the fashionable people, who go a-hunting, are equipped with their jack-boots, bag-wigs, swords and pistols: but I saw the other day a scene still more grotesque. On the road to Choissi a *fiacre*, or hackney-coach, stopped and out came five or six men, armed with musquets, who took post, each behind a separate tree. I asked our servant who they were, imagining they might be *archers*, or footpads of justice, in pursuit of some malefactor. But guess my surprise, when the fellow told me, they were gentlemen *à la chasse*. They were, in fact, come out from Paris, in this equipage, to take the diversion of hare-hunting; that is, of shooting from behind a tree at the hares that chanced to pass. Indeed, if they had nothing more in view, but to destroy the game, this was a very effectual method; for the hares are in such plenty in this neighbourhood that I have seen a dozen together in the same field. I think this way of hunting in a coach or chariot might be properly adopted at London, in favour of those aldermen of the city, who are too unwieldy to follow on horseback.'

Smollett was intolerant of the religious customs of the country, and would not, so far as possible, adapt himself to them. 'At Brignolles, where we dined, I was obliged to quarrel with the landlady, and threaten to leave her house, before she would indulge us with any sort of flesh-meat. It was meagre day, and she had made her provision accordingly. She even hinted some dissatisfaction at having heretics in her house: but as I was not disposed to eat stinking fish with ragouts of eggs and onions, I insisted upon a leg of mutton, and a brace of fine partridges which I found in the larder.'

Again, maliciously no doubt, but with a nice humour, he wrote about the Roman Catholic custom of saying masses for the souls of the dead:

'There is another branch of traffic engrossed by the monks. Some convents have such a number of masses bequeathed to them, that they find it impossible to execute the will of the donors. In this case, they agree by the lump with the friars of poorer convents, who say the masses for less money than has been allotted by the defunct, and their employers pocket the difference: for example, my grandfather bequeathes a sum of money to a certain convent, to have a number of masses said for the repose of his soul, at the price of ten sols each; and this convent, not having time to perform them, bargains with the friars of another to say them for six sols apiece, so that they gain four sols upon every mass; for it matters not to the soul of the deceased where they are said, so they be properly authenticated. A poor gentleman of Nice, who piques himself much on the noble blood that runs in his veins, though he has not a pair of whole breeches to wear, complained to me, that his great-grand-mother had founded a perpetual mass for the repose of her own soul, at the rate of fifteen sols (ninepence, English) a day; which, indeed, was all that now remained of the family estate. He said, what made the hardship the greater on him, she had been dead above fifty years, and in all probability her soul had got out of purgatory long ago; therefore the continuance of the mass was an unnecessary expense. I told him I thought in such a case the defunct should appear before the civil magistrate, and make affidavit of her being at peace, for the advantage of the family. He mused a little, and shrugging up his shoulders, replied that where the interests of

the Church were at stake, he did not believe a spirit's declaration would be held legal evidence.'

So stringent were Smollett's criticisms of France, that one of his correspondents evidently remonstrated, for he is found replying:

'You remind me of my promise to communicate the remarks I have still to make on the French nation, and at the same time you signify your opinion, that I am too severe in my former observations. You even hint a suspicion, that this severity is owing to some personal cause of resentment; but, I protest, I have no particular cause of animosity against any individual of that country. I have neither obligation to, nor quarrel with, any subject of France; and when I meet with a Frenchman worthy of my esteem, I can receive him into my friendship with as much cordiality, as I could feel for any fellow-citizen of the same merit. I even respect the nation, for the number of great men it has produced in all arts and sciences. I respect the French officers, in particular, for their gallantry and valour; and especially for that generous humanity that they exercise towards their enemies, even amidst the horrors of war. This liberal spirit is the only circumstance of antient chivalry, which I think was worth preserving.'

At the beginning of December, Smollett arrived at Nice, the objective of his journey, and there prepared to settle down for a considerable period.

'In the town of Nice, you will find no ready-furnished lodgings for a whole family. Just without one of the gates there are two houses to be let, ready-furnished for about five louis d'or per month. As for the country houses in this neighbourhood, they

are damp in winter, and generally without chimnies; and in summer they are rendered uninhabitable by the heat and the vermin. If you hire a tenement in Nice you must take it for a year certain; and this will cost you about twenty pounds sterling. For this price, I have a ground floor paved with brick, consisting of a kitchen, two large halls, a couple of good rooms with chimnies, three large closets that serve for bed-chambers, and dressing-rooms, a butler's room, and three apartments for servants, lumber or stores, to which we ascend by narrow wooden stairs. I have likewise two small gardens, well stocked with oranges, lemons, peaches, figs, grapes, corinths, sallad, and pot-herbs. It is supplied with a draw-well of good water, and there is another in the vestibule of the house, which is cool, large, and magnificent. You may hire furniture for such a tenement for about two guineas a month: but I chose rather to buy what was necessary; and it cost me about sixty pounds. I suppose it will fetch me about half the money when I leave the place.'

Of course, at Nice Smollett found much about which to complain. It is very difficult to find a tolerable cook. . . . A common maid, who serves the people of the country for three or four livres a month, will not live with an English family under eight or ten. They are all slovenly, slothful, and unconscionable cheats. The shopkeepers are generally poor, greedy, over-reaching. . . . The chickens and pullets are extremely meagre, and his efforts to fatten them have been a failure; in summer, to spite him, they have the pip and die in great numbers. . . . He does, however, admit, *malgré lui*, it may be observed, that there is a number of palatable foods to be had.

In spite of what Smollett said about Nice and its inhabitants, the authorities paid him the compliment of naming a street Rue Smolett, which runs from the Boulevard Risso to the Boulevard Soleau, and is some distance from the harbour. In spite of the many changes in the town, and the fact that many of the old landmarks have been obliterated by being renamed even in the last few years, the Rue Smolett still remains as a memorial of his stay there.

While his headquarters were at Nice, Smollett visited Rome, Genoa, and other places of less note. He returned home by Aix en Provence, Toulon, Marseilles, and Lyons, to Boulogne, where he arrived in May 1765, and stayed for two or three weeks:

'I am at last in a situation to indulge my view with a sight of Britain, after an absence of two years; and, indeed, you cannot imagine what pleasure I feel while I survey the white cliffs of Dover, at this distance. Not that I am at all affected by the *nescia qua dulcedine natalis soli* of Horace. That seems to be a kind of fanatacism founded on the prejudices of education, which induces a Laplander to place the terrestrial paradise among the snows of Norway, and a Swiss to prefer the barren mountains of Solleure to the fruitful plains of Lombardy. I am attached to my country, because it is the land of liberty, cleanliness and convenience: but I love it still more tenderly, as the scene of all my interesting connexions; as the habitation of my friends, for whose conversation, correspondence, and esteem, I wish alone to live.'

Chapter XI

1765–1767

Smollett again visits Bath for his health—Correspondence with Dr. Moore—Smollett's 'Travels through France and Italy'—He is lampooned in 'The Race'—Visits Edinburgh—His sister, Mrs. Telfer—Judge Smollett—Stays with Alexander Carlyle—His praise of Glasgow—Again at Bath—Strives in vain to secure a Consulship at Nice or Leghorn—Correspondence with Hume and Boswell—'The History and Adventures of an Atom'.

Soon after his return to England in June 1765 Smollett again was unwell, and once more went to Bath to take the waters.

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'Dear Sir, 'London, *July* 16, 1765.

'I take this opportunity of my friend Mr. Williams, to enquire after your health, and to let you know that I am returned to England after an absence of two years, during which I have been more than once at the brink of the grave. After all I have brought back no more than the skeleton of what I was, but with proper care that skeleton may hang for some few years together. I propose to pass the winter at Bath, and if I find that climate intolerable, I shall once more go into exile, and never more think of returning.—Your affectionate humble servant,

'Ts. Smollett.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'BATH, IN SOMERSETSHIRE,
Nov. 13, 1765.

'Your friendly solicitude about my health and concerns requires that I should give you a short sketch of my present situation. I gave up all connection with the *Critical Review*, and every other literary system, before I quitted England. Since my return I have written a few articles merely for amusement, but I have now no concern in the work. The observations I made in the course of my travels through France and Italy, I have thrown into a series of letters, which will make two volumes in octavo. They are now printing, and will be published in the spring. I will not answer for their success with the public; but as I have given a sort of natural history of Nice, with my remarks upon that climate, and a register of the weather, I hope the performance may be useful to other valetudinarians who travel for the recovery of their health. With respect to my own health I cannot complain. I have not lately lost any ground, but on the contrary have gained some flesh since my coming to Bath, where I have been since five weeks. I do not, however, flatter myself that I shall continue to mend, for I have always found myself better for about a month after any change of air, and then I relapse into my former state of invalidity. My disorder is no other than weak lungs and a constitution prone to catarrhs, with an extraordinary irritability of the nervous system.

'Nothing agrees with me so well as hard exercise, which, however, the indolence of my disposition continually counteracts. If I was a galley slave, and kept to hard labour for two or three years, I believe I should recover my health entirely. The Bath water agrees

with me wonderfully well; and upon the whole, I am so well at present that some of my friends declare they never saw me look better ; but I will venture to say I am not above half as big as I was when you saw me last. To tell you the truth, I look upon my being alive as a sort of resuscitation, for last year I thought myself in the last stage of consumption. I long eagerly to see you and some other friends in Scotland, but the distance between us is so great that I despair of being ever able to gratify my desire.

'Make my best compliments to Mrs. Moore: remember me to all our Glasgow friends; comfort me with a letter when you have leisure time, and believe me to be ever, dear Sir, your affectionate humble servt., 'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

While abroad Smollett kept up an active correspondence with his intimates in England and Scotland. He wrote a number of lengthy letters, mainly to his medical friends. It is not known to whom each letter was written, but it may be assumed that among his correspondents were George Macaulay, John Armstrong, John Moore, and William Hunter. It was natural enough that he should regale them with more or less detailed accounts of his health; but he wrote also of the scenery and climate of the places he visited, of the customs of the people among whom he lived for two years, of food and drink, of convents and priests, of pictures and statuary, and of various incidents that happened to him while away. The letters are unquestionably of high literary quality, and give an extraordinary vivid picture of places and people.

It was the original intention of Smollett, on his return home, to write a formal account of his travels, but pressure of work forced him to take the line of least resistance, and he collected from his friends the

letters he had written to them, and, with a minimum of alteration, published them in 1766—the idea may have suggested itself to him by Fielding's 'Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon', which had appeared twelve years before—as 'Travels through France and Italy. Containing Observations on Character, Customs, Religion, Government, Police, Commerce, Arts, and Antiquities. With a particular Description of the Town, Territory, and Climate of Nice: to which is added, A Register of the Weather, kept during a Residence of Eighteen Months in that City.' His book for a while suffered in reputation by the bitter comment of the author by Laurence Sterne and by the studied depreciation by Horace Walpole, but it has been restored to its rightful place in the general esteem by the edition of 1907, with its brilliant and learned Introduction by Thomas Seccombe — an introduction so striking as to evoke a front-page article in the London *Times Literary Supplement*. 'It is the work of a scholar, an observer of human nature, and, by election, a satirist of no mean order,' Seccombe writes. 'It gives us some characteristic social vignettes, some portraits of the road of an unsurpassed freshness and clearness. It contains some historical and geographical observations worthy of one of the shrewdest and most sagacious publicists of the day. It is interesting to the etymologist for the important share it has taken in naturalising useful foreign words into our speech. It concludes (as we shall have occasion to observe) a respectable quantum of wisdom fit to become proverbial, and several passages of admirable literary quality. . . . On the whole, I maintain that it is more than equal in interest to the "Journey to the Hebrides", and that it deserves a very considerable portion of the praise that has hitherto been lavished too indiscriminately upon the "Voyage to Lisbon".'

Smollett was, indeed, the born travel-book writer, and it is a thousand pities that this was his only effort in that direction. In spite of his querulousness, he did not let himself as a rule be unduly prejudiced, and he wrote down things as he saw them. He was no blind worshipper of names or things: he judged for himself, and recorded his own impressions. If he looked on the Pantheon and saw that it was not good in his eyes, he had the honesty to say so. There may have been a defect in his vision, but not in his character. It was this habit of judging for himself that makes the descriptions in his novels of places so valuable. No historian of Bath, Bristol, Harrogate, and the other watering-places introduced in 'Roderick Random' and the other books, can afford to neglect the accounts therein given.

Smollett, in the late spring of 1766, decided again to go north. He was heartened on his journey by a lampoon in 'The Race', a dull imitation of 'The Dunciad'.

> Next Smollett came. What author dare resist
> Historian, critic, bard, and novelist?
> 'To reach thy temple, honour'd Fame,' he cried,
> 'Where, where's the avenue I have not tried?
> But since the glorious present of to-day
> Is meant to grace alone the poet's lay,
> My claim I wave to every art beside
> And rest my plea upon "The Regicide".
>
> . . . . . .
>
> But if, to crown the labours of my Muse,
> Thou, inauspicious, should'st the wreath refuse,
> Whoe'er attempts it in this scribbling age
> Shall feel the Scottish pow'rs of Critic rage.
> Thus spurn'd, thus disappointed of my aim,
> I'll stand a bugbear in the road to Fame,
> Each future author's infant hopes undo,
> And blast the budding honours of his brow.'
> He said—and grown with future vengeance big,
> Grimly he shook his scientific wig.

To clench the cause, and fuel add to the fire,
Behind came Hamilton, his trusty Squire:
Awhile he paus'd revolving the disgrace
And gathering all the horrors of his face;
Then rais'd his head, and, turning to the crowd,
Burst into bellowing, terrible and loud:—
'Hear my resolve; and first by —— I swear,
By Smollett and his gods, whoe'er shall dare
With him for glorious fame to vie,
Sous'd in the bottom of a ditch shall lie;
And know, the world no other shall confess,
While I have crab-tree, life, or letter-press.'
Scar'd at the menace, authors fearful grew,
Poor Virtue trembled, e'en Vice look'd blue.

Smollett accompanied by his wife paid a visit to his widowed sister, Mrs. Telfer, who lived in a flat at the head of St. John Street, Edinburgh. His mother, aged, but still vivacious, was living with her daughter.[1] Mrs. Telfer was a clever, spirited woman, and possessed of a great deal of racy Scotch humour. Of her, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe told Dr. Robert Chambers the following story: 'She was fond of cards—ill-natured looking, with a high nose—but not a bad temper. A lady, a near relation of mine, was in her house one evening, when one of the Edinburgh bailies, who was a tallow-chandler, paid her a visit. She said, "Come awa', bailie, and take a trick at the cards." "Troth, madam, I ha'e nae siller." "Then, let us play for a pound of candles." '

Smollett visited his elderly cousin, James Smollett, at this time resident at Edinburgh, and to whose estates he was heir-presumptive. 'Mr. Smollett, one of the Judges of the Commissary Court, which is now sitting,' the novelist in his character of Matthew Bramble wrote in 'Humphry Clinker,' 'has very kindly insisted upon our lodging at his country house,

[1] She passed away in the autumn of this year.

on the banks of Loch Lomond, about fourteen miles beyond Glasgow. For this last city we shall set out in two days, and take Stirling in our way, well provided with recommendations from our friends at Edinburgh, whom, I protest, I shall leave with much regret. I am so far from thinking it any hardship to live in this country, that, if I was obliged to lead a town life, Edinburgh would certainly be the headquarters.'

The compliment to Edinburgh came from Smollett's heart, for he always wrote of that city with enthusiasm. 'Edinburgh is a hot-bed of genius,' he remarked. 'I have had the good fortune to be made acquainted with many authors of the first distinction; such as the two Humes, Robertson, Smith, Wallace, Blair, Ferguson, Wilkie, etc., and I have found them all as agreeable in conversation as they are instructive and entertaining in their writings. These acquaintances I owe to the friendship of Dr. Carlyle, who wants nothing but inclination to figure with the rest upon paper.'

Smollett visited Alexander Carlyle, as the latter has related in his Autobiography:

'He came out to Musselburgh and passed a day and night with me, and went to church and heard me preach. I introduced him to Cardonnel the Commissioner, with whom he supped, and they were much pleased with each other. Smollett has reversed this in his "Humphry Clinker", where he makes the Commissioner his old acquaintance. He went next to Glasgow and that neighbourhood to visit his friends, and returned again to Edinburgh in October, when I had frequent meetings with him—one in particular, in a tavern, where there supped with him Commissioner Cardonnel, Mr. Hepburn of Keith, John Home, and one or two more. Hepburn was

so much pleased with Cardonnel that he said that if he went into rebellion again it should be for the grandson of the Duke of Monmouth. Cardonnel and I went with Smollett to Sir David Kinloch's, and passed the day, when John Home and Logan and I conducted him to Dunbar, where we stayed together all night.

'Smollett was a man of very agreeable conversation and of much genuine humour; and, though not a profound scholar, possessed a philosophical mind, and was capable of making the soundest observations on human life, and of discussing the excellence or seeing the ridicule of every character he met with.'

Smollett went on to Glasgow, and later in 'Humphry Clinker' he paid that city a high compliment:

'Glasgow is the pride of Scotland, and, indeed, it might very well pass for an elegant and flourishing city in any part of Christendom. There we had the good fortune to be received into the house of Mr. Moore, an eminent surgeon, to whom we were recommended by one of our friends at Edinburgh, and truly he could not have done us more essential service. Mr. Moore is a merry, facetious companion, sensible and shrewd, with a considerable fund of humour; and his wife an agreeable woman, well-bred, kind, and obliging. Kindness, which I take to be the essence of good nature and humanity, is the distinguishing characteristic of the Scotch ladies in their own country. Our landlord showed us everything, and introduced us to all the world at Glasgow, where, through his recommendation, we were complimented with the freedom of the town. Considering the trade and opulence of this place, it cannot but abound with gaiety and diversions. Here is a great number of young fellows that rival the youth of the

capital in spirit and expense; and I was soon convinced that all the female beauties of Scotland were not assembled at the hunters' ball in Edinburgh. The town of Glasgow flourishes in learning as well as in commerce. Here is an university, with professors in all the different branches of science, liberally endowed and judiciously chosen. It was vacation time when I passed, so that I could not entirely satisfy my curiosity; but their mode of education is certainly preferable to ours in some respects. The students are not left to the private instruction of tutors, but taught in public schools or classes, each science by its particular professor or regent.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Moore

'Dear Moore, 'BATH, *February* 8, 1767.

'I have been for some weeks resolved to write you an account of my health, about which I know your friendly solicitude, but what hastens the execution of my purpose, is a letter I received last post from Commissary Smollett, desiring me to recommend a poor relation of ours to your countenance and protection. Her name is Mrs. ——, sister to ——. This Unfortunate gentlewoman married ——, and had a small estate in the Highlands, which having squandered away, he made his retreat to Jamaica, leaving his wife destitute, with a child upon her hands. In this emergency she had virtue enough to study midwifery under Dr. Young at Edinburgh, who I am told, has given ample testimony of her capacity; and she is represented to me as a person of unblemished character. She has, it seems, resolved to settle at Glasgow, and there exercise her profession. I need say no more, knowing as I do, that you will have a proper regard to the interest I take in her concerns; and that if

you find her properly qualified, you will encourage her as much as your own views and connections may permit.

'So much for Mrs. ——. Now for Dr. Smollett. You must remember the miserable way in which I was at parting from you in August last; at my return to Bath, I caught a cold in consequence of which my rheumatic returned, and the disorder in my breast recurred, namely, orthopnœa, with an ugly cough and spitting, exclusive of a low fever from which I have never been free. But these symptoms gave me little disturbance in comparison with the ulcer on my forearm, which continued to spread until it occupied the whole space from about three inches above the wrist to the ball of the thumb, so that I was entirely deprived of the use of my right hand, and the inflammation and pain daily increased. In the beginning of November, it was supposed to be cancerous; at that period I could not sleep without an opiate, my fever became continual, my appetite failed, and the rheumatism again invaded me from the neck to the heel. In a word, I despaired of ever seeing the end of the winter, and every night when I went to bed, fervently wished that I might be dead before morning.

'In this comfortable situation I consulted with Messrs. Middleton and Sharp, the two most eminent surgeons in England, who were then and are still at Bath. I had my hand dressed before them, and proposed a course for the cure, which they approved. I forthwith began to dress the sore with double mercurial ointment without turpentine. I took a dose of Van Swieten's solution of corrosive sublimate every morning and drank a strong decoction sarsae every day. On the second day of the regimen the matter was much mended and the pain considerably abated.

In one week I was quite free of the fever and rheumatism, and my appetite returned in full perfection. In ten days I left off taking the sublimate, for by this time the ulcer was almost closed, and in another week skinned over. It continues still hard and scaly, but the cicatrix seems quite firm, and I can now use my hand almost as well as ever. I still drink the decoction, and never stirred out of my house till yesterday, when I ventured out in a chair and got a cursed cold, which I find will produce an ugly fit of the asthma; this, however, I will bear without repining. In a word, my cure is looked upon as something supernatural, and I must own that I now find myself in better health and spirits than I have been at any time these seven years.

'Had I been as well in summer I should have exquisitely enjoyed my expedition to Scotland, which was productive of nothing to me but misery and disgust. Between friends, I am now convinced that my brain was in some measure affected; for I had a kind of *coma vigil*[1] upon me from April to November without intermission. In consideration of these circumstances I know you will forgive all my peevishness and discontent, and tell good Mrs. Moore to whom I present my most cordial respects, that with regard to me she has as yet seen nothing but the wrong side of the tapestry.

'Pray remember me kindly to your brother-in-law Mr. Simson, Drs. Stevenson and Douglas, to honest Robin Urie, and all my Glasgow friends. Write

[1] The remarkable expression of a *Coma Vigil*, difficult to explain, may be described by a verse of Shakespeare, in his antithetical account of love, a passion made up of contrarieties. Thus the *Coma Vigil* was

'Still-waking sleep! that is not what it is.'

ISAAC DISRAELI—*Calamities of Authors.*

to me with your first convenience, directing to Dr. Smollett, Gay Street, Bath, and believe me with the warmest affection and esteem,

'Dear Moore,

'Your much obliged humble servant,

'T. SMOLLETT.'

The fact is that Smollett was now a very weary, very sick man. He was imperatively ordered by his physicians to go to a milder climate. Money, however, was scarce, and his friends advised him to apply to the Government for a consulship in the south of Europe. 'I am now going to the south of France, in order to try the effects of that climate, and probably I shall never return,' he had written to an American correspondent in May 1763. 'I am much obliged to you for the hope you express, that I have obtained some provision from his Majesty; but the truth is, I have neither pension nor place, nor am I of that disposition which can stoop to solicit either. I have always piqued myself upon my independency, and, I trust in God, I shall preserve it to my dying day.' To get away from England, however, was necessary. He approached his brother-historian, David Hume, then Under-Secretary to Henry Seymour Conway, Secretary of State for the Northern Department, and Hume put forward the suggestion of an appointment for Smollett to Lord Shelburne, Secretary of State for the Southern Department.

David Hume to Tobias Smollett

'Dear Sir, 'LONDON, *July* 18, 1767.

'I have had a conversation with Lord Shelburne concerning your affairs: he told me, that he had long been pre-engaged for the Consulship of

Nice to the Spanish Ambassador, and could not possibly get free of that obligation. I then mentioned the Consulship of Leghorn; but he said he was already engaged for that office to a friend of Mr. Dunning, the lawyer. 'On the whole, I cannot flatter you with any hopes of success from that quarter, even supposing his Lordship were to remain in office which is very uncertain, considering the present state of our Ministry. For, of all our annual confusions, the present seems to be the most violent, and to threaten the most entire revolution, and the most important events. As Lord Chatham's state of health appears totally desperate, and as Lord Shelburne's connection is supposed to be chiefly, if not solely, with him, many people foretell a short duration to the greatness of the last-named minister. Everything is uncertain: there is a mighty combination to overpower the King. The force of the Crown is great, but is not employed with that steadiness which its friends would wish. I pretend not to foresee, much less to foretell, the consequences. I am dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

'DAVID HUME.'

Others evidently interested themselves to secure a post for Smollett, as is shown by the following letter, which must have been written about this time:

The Earl of Shelburne to the Duchess of Hamilton

'Madam, 'HILL-STREET, *Tuesday*.

'I am honoured with your Grace's letter, enclosing one from Dr. Smollett. It is above a year since I was applied to by Dr. Smollett, through a person whom I wished extremely to oblige, but

there were, and still subsist, some applications for the same office, of a nature which it will be impossible to get over in favour of Mr. Smollett, which makes it impossible for me to give him the least hope of it. I could not immediately recollect what had passed on this subject, else I should have had the honour to answer your Grace's letter sooner. I am, with great truth and respect, your Grace's most obedient and most humble servant,

'SHELBURNE.'

'These applications (for a Consulship) were fruitless. Dr. Smollett had never *spanielled* ministers: he could not endure the insolence of office, or stoop to cultivate the favour of any person merely on account of his power: and besides, he was a man of genius.' So wrote Dr. John Moore, who in setting down these words showed his devotion to Smollett. Thomas Campbell later echoed this sentiment: 'Smollett had written both for and against Ministers, perhaps not always from independent motives, but to find the man whose genius has given exhilaration to millions, thus reduced to beg, and to be refused the means that might have soothed the pillow of his death-bed in a foreign country, is a circumstance that fills the mind rather too strongly with the recollection of Cervantes'.

But to what do these declamatory passages really amount! Smollett might not be able to endure the insolence of office, yet he could bring himself to apply to a Minister for a place. Let it be admitted that Smollett is a man of genius: therefore he should be appointed Consul at Nice, or Naples, or Leghorn, or any other town where the climate would be beneficial to his health. Smollett is an excellent novelist: therefore he is a most desirable representative abroad of his Britannic Majesty—in spite of the fact that he has shown a strong anti-French bias. It is true

that the Consular Service was not so highly organised then as it is to-day; but even then some acquaintance with commercial affairs must have been desirable. And, further, urbanity was, or should have been, an essential quality: whatever else Smollett may have been, urbanity was certainly not one of his qualities.

David Hume to Tobias Smollett

'My Dear Sir, '*September* 21, 1768.

'I did not see your friend, Captain Strobo, till the day before I left Cirencester, and only for a little time; but he seemed to be a man of good sense, and has surely had the most extraordinary adventures in the world. He has promised to call on me when he comes to London, and I shall always see him with pleasure.

'But what is this you tell me of your perpetual exile, and of your never returning to this country? I hope that as this idea arose from the bad state of your health, it will vanish on your recovery, which, from your past experience, you may expect from those happier climates to which you are retiring; after which the desire of revisiting your native country will probably return upon you, unless the superior cheapness of foreign countries prove an obstacle, and detain you there. I could wish that means had been fallen on to remove this objection; and that at least it might be equal to you to live anywhere, except when the consideration of your health gave the preference to one climate above another. But the indifference of Ministers towards literature, which has been long, and indeed almost always, the case in England, gives little prospect of any alteration in this particular.

'I am sensible of your great partiality in the good

opinion you express towards me; but it gives me no less pleasure than if it were founded on the greatest truth; for I accept it as a pledge of your good will and friendship. I wish an opportunity of showing my sense of it may present itself during your absence. I assure you I should embrace it with great alacrity; and you need have no scruple, on every occasion, of having recourse to me. I am, my dear Sir, with great concern and sincerity, your most obedient and humble servant,

'DAVID HUME.'

James Boswell to Tobias Smollett

'Dear Sir, 'EDINBURGH, *March* 14, 1768.

'That evil is perpetually insinuating itself into the best enjoyments of man is an old reflection, but every day adds some additional evidence to the truth of it.

'I have just published an account of Corsica. I had received great applause from many distinguished men; and, what my enthusiastic soul prizes still more, I have interested many a British bosom in behalf of the brave Corsicans.

'I therefore hoped to enjoy one portion of unmingled felicity; and I did enjoy it, till yesterday that I was told by Mr. Douglas of Douglas, who is just come from London, that he understood Dr. Smollett had taken amiss what I have said of him in my book.

'Allow me to assure you, Sir, that you have no reason to be offended with me. In page 12 of my preface, I say, that the error with respect to Paoli's age has found its way into your History, by which I meant to show how very obscure the Corsicans have hitherto been; and in pages 124 and 125 of the account, I observe, that an oath, which was generally believed to be genuine, has been admitted

into your History; but that Paoli has assured me i
was a fiction; by which I meant to correct a mistake
without impeaching the author; and as I have at th
same time observed, that you display a generou
warmth in favour of the Corsicans, I had not the mos
distant idea of offending you.

'When I really mean to offend, I persist, till
see I am wrong. But I should be very sorry, if on
whom I regard as I do Dr. Smollett, should imagin
that I meant to offend, when it was far from m
thoughts. I therefore take the earliest opportunit
to undeceive you, and I flatter myself this letter wil
have that effect.

'I shall be in London about the 21st, and I hop
to meet you before I return to Scotland, but, in th
meantime, pray make me easy by a line addresse
at Mr. Dilly's, bookseller in the Poultry. I am
dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

'James Boswell.'

'*London, 26th March.* — I have carried up thi
letter in my pocket.'

Since no official post for Smollett was forthcoming
and it was imperative that he should without dela
repair to a warmer climate, there was nothing to b
done but for him to go abroad, dependent for hi
livelihood upon his own efforts, and early in March
1769 he departed, never again to return.

If Smollett left England in 1763 with a benediction
in the form of his chapter on the arts in his History
when he went away six years later he did it with
curse in the shape of 'The History and Adventure
of an Atom'.

Having taken as his models 'Gil Blas' and 'Don
Quixote', Smollett now sought for yet another master-

piece to inspire him: he found it in 'Gulliver's Travels' and wrote 'The History and Adventures of an Atom', which, according to the title-page of the first edition, appeared in 1749, but was, as a matter of fact, published in 1769. In this book Smollett satirised the leaders of all political parties from 1754 until the dissolution of the Chatham Administration. 'The inconsistency of the great Minister, encouraging the German war, seems to have altered Smollett's opinion of his patriotism,' Sir Walter Scott wrote. 'The chief purpose of the work (besides giving the author an opportunity, like that of Ishmael, against every man) is to inspire a national horror of continental connections.' Alexander Chalmers was more severe, and it cannot be denied that there is something to be said for his contention: 'The whole proves, which has often been seen since Smollett's time, that the measures which are right and proper when a reward is in view, are wrong and abominable when the reward is withheld. The publication of this work, while it proclaimed that Smollett's sincerity as a political writer was not much to be depended on, afforded another instance of that imprudence which his biographer, Dr. John Moore, has ingeniously carried over to the account of independence.'

'The History and Adventures of an Atom' was announced as written by the late Nathaniel Peacock, and was ushered into the world with an 'Advertisement from the Publisher to the Reader':

'In these ticklish times it may be necessary to give such an account of the following sheets, as will exempt me from the plague of prosecution.

'On the 7th of March, in the present year 1748, they were offered to me for sale by a tall, thin woman, about the age of three score, dressed in a gown of

bombazine, with a cloak and bonnet of black silk, both a little the worse for the wear. She called herself Dorothy Hatchet, spinster, of the parish of Oldstreet, administratrix of Mr. Nathaniel Peacock, who died in the said parish on the 5th day of last April, and lies buried in the churchyard of Islington, where his monument is distinguished by a monumental board inscribed with the following tristich:

Hic, haec, hoc,
Here lies the block
Of old Nathaniel Peacock.

'In this particular, any person whatever may satisfy himself by taking an afternoon's walk to Islington, where at the White House, he may recreate and refresh himself with excellent tea and hot rolls for so small a charge as eightpence.

'As to the MS., before I would treat for it, I read it over attentively and found it contained divers curious particulars of a foreign history, without any allusion to, or resemblance with, the transactions of these times. I likewise turned over to Kempfer and the Universal History, and found in their several accounts of Japan, many of the names and much of the matter specified in the following sheets. Finally, that I might run no risk of misconstruction, I had recourse to an eminent chamber-council of my acquaintance, who diligently perused the whole and declared it was no more actionable than the Vision of Ezekiel, or the Lamentations of Jeremiah the prophet. Thus assured, I purchased the copy, which I now present in print, with the best respects, to the courteous reader; being his very humble servant,

'S. ETHERINGTON.

'BUCKLERSBURY.

'*Vivant Rex et Regina*'

This book is the most vitriolic Smollett wrote. He sneered at his own country, and placed every one under the harrow — royalty, statesmen, judges, admirals, and generals. It is, to be brief, a dull book written by a man incited to venom by severe ill-health. No doubt he thought that he was doing his duty by writing this book, but at the time his judgement was warped: his sincerity is not to be doubted: and that is all that can be said for 'The History and Adventures of an Atom'.[1]

[1] A 'key' to the characters in that book will be found in the Appendix to this work.

Chapter XII

1769–1771

The Smolletts go abroad—Correspondence with Dr. John Armstrong, Caleb Whitefoord, George Colman, Alexander Telfer, Dr. John Hunter, and John Gray.

SMOLLETT and his wife went first to the baths at Lucca, and then travelled to Pisa, where they stayed at the Casa Lenzi, on the Ponte Grande. Later they took up their residence for a while at Leghorn, and then, with two compatriots, rented a villa some two miles outside the town, near Antignano, under the shadow of Monte Nero, and overlooking the sea.

The following correspondence may be left to speak for itself. At least it shows that Smollett kept in touch with his old friends in these last years of his life.

Dr. John Armstrong to Tobias Smollett

'LONDON, *March* 28, 1769.

'O, my dear Doctor, I should severely reproach myself, for having so long delayed answering your letter, which gave much pleasure and entertainment, not only to me, but to all our common friends, if it was not that I waited for some news that might please you. I have none to send you at last, except you are, as I am, upon the Douglas side; but this is treating you with stale intelligence.

'It is needless to say how much I rejoice in your recovery, but I have all along had great confidence in the vigorous stamina with which nature has blessed you. I hope you may, within a year or two be able to weather out, if not an English winter, at least an English summer: meantime if you won't come to us, I'll come to you; and shall, with the help of small punch, and your company, laugh at the Tuscan dog-days.

'I enjoy, with a pleasing sympathy, the agreeable society you find amongst the professors at Pisa. All countries, and all religions, are the same to men of liberal minds; and the most contemptible, sometimes even the most dangerous, of all animals, is an ill-natured blockhead, who affects to despise his neighbours, because he secretly envies their superior abilities, and regards them with a jealous eye.

'The daily, industrious, indefatigable operations of the most pernicious lies—the most impudent, audacious doctrines that were ever practised upon a blind, stupid, ignorant, profane populace, still continue to prosper. The London mob have long, every hour of the day, *damn'd their eye-sight*, and they happen to have good reason for it. I will not at once disgust and shock you with the recital of such seditious and treasonable insolencies, as never durst, before Wednesday last, brow-beat a throne—at least never with impunity. Your friends at Pisa envy our Constitution. I am afraid we may, in a short time, be reduced to sigh after theirs; for the view at present, all around us, is an object of the most extreme indignation, contempt, and horror.

'Meantime, the infernal spirit of the most absurd discord, Erynnis, blind and blundering, in her dotage, has not yet so universally poisoned the *noble* mind of the public, as to engross it entirely to the clumsy, dirty,

blackguard amusements and exercises. For history still makes a shift to waddle on, though it grows rather a *lame duck*; and there are still jack-daws enough to swallow the green cheese of tragedy, and the no less insipid curd of *new comedy*. So much the better—all trades would live, they say.

'But, talking of some recent publications, puts me in mind of something I had almost forgotten to tell you—That several people, who have a particular regard and esteem for the reputed author of the "Present State of all Nations," are sorry to find that he has too much exposed the posteriors of our brothers in the north; and made some undeserved compliments to their neighbours in the south, who have already a comfortable enough share of self-conceit; and that, amongst perfections, he allows them to be the handsomest people in Europe, which they think is a very disputable opinion.

'All the friends you have mentioned are well, and desire to be kindly remembered to you. Your health is never forgotten in our compotations. I am sorry to tell you, that our society has lost one worthy member, in Dr. Russell, who died some months ago, of a malignant fever. I beg you'll let me hear from you soon; and am, with my best compliments to Mrs. Smollett, at the same time never forgetting Miss [*illegible*], and Miss Currie, my dear Sir, your affectionate friend and faithful humble servant, 'JOHN ARMSTRONG.'

Tobias Smollett to Caleb Whitefoord

My dear Sir, 'MONTE NERO, *May* 18, 1770.

'You could not have made me a more agreeable present than the papers I received by the hands of our good friend Dr. Armstrong. Some of the pieces I had read with great pleasure in one of your evening

papers; but my own satisfaction is much increased by knowing you are the author; for without flattery, I really think these fourteen letters contain more sense, spirit, wit and humour than all I have as yet seen written on the other side of the question; and I am fully persuaded, that if you had two or three co-adjutors of equal talents to play to one another's hands, and keep up the ball of argument and ridicule, you would actually at the long run either shame or laugh the people of their absurd infatuation. Your ideas of character and things so exactly tally with mine, that I cannot help flattering myself so far as to imagine I should have expressed my sentiments in the same manner on the same subjects, had I been disposed to make them public; supposing still that my ability corresponded with my ambition.

'I hope you will not discontinue your endeavours to represent faction and false patriotism in their true colours, though I believe the Ministry little deserves that any man of genius should draw his pen in their defence. They seem to inherit the absurd stoicism of Lord Bute, who set himself up as a pillory to be pulled by all the blackguards of England, upon the supposition that they would grow tired and leave off. I don't find that your Ministers take any pains even to vindicate their moral characters from the foulest imputation: I would never desire a stronger proof of a bad heart than a total disregard to reputation. A late nobleman, who had been a member of several administrations owned to me that one good writer was of more importance than twenty placemen in the House of Commons.

'I do not know when I shall have an opportunity of transmitting the papers to Mr. Udny, neither do I know in what part of Italy he resides. I should have sent them to Dr. Armstrong to Rome, had I read your

letter before he set out: but as he stayed at Leghorn only to dine with me I did not open your packet till he was gone. However, I shall not fail to comply with your directions as soon as possible. I am at present rusticated on the side of a mountain that overlooks the sea, in the neighbourhood of Leghorn, a most romantic and salutary situation, where I should be happy in receiving another such mark of your charity and good-will; and if there is anything in Tuscany that you desire, I beg you will without ceremony put it in my power to oblige you. Pray, who is old *Sly-boots*? Is not *Junius* supposed to be Burke? What is become of Mrs. Macaulay? They say she has been obliged to retire: for what reason I know not.

'Do pray throw away half an hour in giving me the political anecdotes of the times, and direct *à Monsieur* Smollett, *chez* Monsieur Renner, negotiant, à Livourne. In the meantime, wishing you every comfort and consolation that this rascally age affords, I am, with great affection and esteem,

'Dear Sir, Your very humble servant,

'Ts. Smollett.'

Dr. John Armstrong to Tobias Smollett

'My Dear Doctor, [London, 1770.]

'I reproach myself—but it is as insignificant as embarrassing to explain some things. So much for that. As to my confidence in your stamina, I can see no reason to flinch from it; but I wish you would avoid unwholesome accidents, as much as possible.

'I am quite serious about my visit to you next autumn. My scheme is now to pass my June and July at Paris; from thence to set out for Italy, either over the Alps, or by sea from Marseilles. I don't

expect the company of any widow-hunter, or any other, that may be too fat and indolent for such an excursion, and hope to pick up some agreeable fellow-traveller, without being at the expense of advertising.

'You feel exactly as I do on the subject of our state politics. But, from some late glimpses, it is still to be hoped that some *patriots* may be disappointed in their favourite view of involving their country in confusion and destruction. As to the King's Bench patriot, it is hard to say from what motive he published a letter of yours, asking some trifling favour of him, on behalf of somebody, for whom the *cham of literature*, Mr. Johnson, had interested himself.[1]

'I have, within this month, published what I call my Miscellanies. Though I admitted my operator to an equal share of profit and loss, the publication has been managed in such a manner, as if there had been a combination to suppress it; notwithstanding which, I am told it makes its way tolerably at least. But I have heard to-day that somebody is to give me a good trimming very soon.

'All friends here remember you very kindly, and our little club at the Two Arms never fail to devote a bumper to you, except when they are in the humour of drinking none but scoundrels. I send my best compliments to Mrs. Smollett, and two other ladies, and beg you'll write me as soon as it suits you, and with black ink. I am always, my dear Doctor, most affectionately yours,

'JOHN ARMSTRONG.'

[1] 'The King's Bench patriot' is John Wilkes. The letter to which reference is made is printed on p. 178 of this work.

Dr. John Armstrong to Tobias Smollett

'Dear Doctor, 'ROME, *June* 2, 1770.

'I arrived here last Thursday se'nnight, and since that time have already seen almost all the most celebrated wonders of Rome. But I am greatly disappointed in these matters, partly, I suppose, from my expectations being too high. But what I have seen here has been in such a hurry, as to make it a fatigue; besides, I have bustled amongst them, neither in very good humour nor good health.

'I have delayed writing, till I could lay before you the plan of my future operations for a few weeks. I propose to post it to Naples, about the middle of next week, along with a colonel of our country, who seems to be a very good-natured man. After having passed a week or ten days there, I shall return hither, and, after having visited Tivoli and Trescali, set out for Leghorn, if possible, in some vessel from Civita Vecchia, for I hate the lodgings upon the roads in this country. I don't expect to be happy till I see Leghorn, and if I find my friend in such health as I wish him, or can hope for him, I should not be disappointed in the chief pleasure I proposed to myself in my visit to Italy. As you talked of a ramble somewhere in the south of France, I shall be extremely happy to attend you.

'I wrote to my brother from Genoa, and desired him to direct his answer to your care at Pisa. If it comes, please direct it, with your own letter, for which I shall long violently, to the care of Mr. Francis Barrazzi, at Rome.

'I am, with best compliments to Mrs. Smollett and the rest of the ladies, my dear Doctor, yours ever affectionately, 'JOHN ARMSTRONG.'

Dr. John Armstrong to Tobias Smollett

'My Dear Doctor, 'ROME, *Saturday, June* 30, 1770.

'Upon my return from Tivoli, on Wednesday last, I had the pleasure to find two letters from you; one dated April 19th, which had gone to London, the other June 7th. By a most provoking blunder of Mr. Barrazzi's clerks, they had both gone round by Naples. I have hired a vestura, which is to take me up here next Monday morning, and set me down in six days at Leghorn; all my company, during that time is, to be the driver, and a blunderbuss of a servant, whom I have reason to think a very honest fellow, but he has such a *flux de bouche* of Italian-French, that I can't have the pleasure of conversing with him; so that, when I am so happy as to meet you, I shall have a double relish for your company, which needs no such sauce. I am, with my compliments to Mrs. Smollett, etc., my dear Doctor, your most affectionate, etc. 'JOHN ARMSTRONG.'

George Colman to Tobias Smollett

'LONDON, *September* 28, 1770.

'Dear Sir,—I have some idea that Mr. Hamilton about two years ago told me he should soon receive a piece from you, which he meant, at your desire, to put into my hands; but since that time I have neither seen nor heard of the piece.

'I hope you enjoy your health abroad, and shall be glad of every opportunity to convince you that I am most heartily and sincerely, dear Sir, etc.

'G. COLMAN.'

Tobias Smollett to his nephew, Alexander Telfer, of Scotston

'Leghorn, *January* 9, 1771.

'Dear Squire,

'I wrote you last week by the post, in answer to yours, that transmitted the Commissary [James Smollett]'s intimation concerning his proposed improvements;[1] and I give you this additional trouble, to introduce the bearer Mr. C——, who proposes (I think) to settle in your neighbourhood, and whom I can very safely recommend to your good offices, having had sufficient time to be acquainted with his character, which is really respectable.

'On Tuesday we are alarmed by an earthquake that visited us in repeated shocks, some of which were violent and terrible. Mr. C—— can inform you of the particulars, as they don't seem to have greatly disturbed his intellects, whatever effects they may have produced on the people of Leghorn, great part of whom fled from the city, some to the country, and some on board ships and vessels in the harbour and canals. I could hardly keep my own family within doors, but, for my own part, I thought it was better to run some risque of being smothered quietly in my own warm bed, than expose myself to certain death from the damps of a dark winter night, while the cold was excessive.

'The bearer can also make you acquainted with the circumstances of my health and manner of living (if you desire to know them), and being a dilettante in music, will communicate his ideas on that subject to you and George Cowper.

'I repeat my compliments to Mrs. Smollett, to

[1] This refers to improvements at Bonhill, for which consent of the novelist, as heir of entail, was necessary.

your mother, to Captain James, to Jeanny, and all friends; and I am without flummery, dear Laird, yours, etc. 'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

Tobias Smollett to Dr. John Hunter

'LEGHORN, *January* 9, 1771.

'With respect to myself, I have nothing to say, but that if I can prevail upon my wife to execute my last will, you shall receive my poor carcase in a box, after I am dead, to be placed among your rarities. I am already so dry and emaciated, that I may pass for an Egyptian mummy, without any other preparation than some pitch and painted linen; unless you think I may deserve the denomination of a curiosity in my own character, I mean that of your old friend, and affectionate humble servant, 'Ts. SMOLLETT.'

John Gray[1] *to Tobias Smollett*

'GENOA, *March* 23, 1771.

'Dear Sir,

'Since I had the pleasure of seeing you at Leghorn, I have visited Bologna, Ferrara, Venice, Padua, Vicenza, Verona, Brescia, and Milan, and have now been about two days in this very magnificent city, which is superior to all the other Italian cities I have seen, excepting Rome, in point of buildings.

'Bologna, where I stayed ten days, is next to Rome in regard to fine paintings, and there are many admirable performances at Venice. The last city is not only very singular in its situation, but in its buildings and its constitution of government. I thought I saw in it some faint shadow of the ancient Roman republic. Modern Rome, as to the government and manner of

[1] Author of the 'History of the World' (12 vols., 1767); translations of the Odes and Epistles of Horace (1778), etc.

living, has not the least resemblance with ancient Rome, but St. Mark's Place at Venice has a great affinity with the Forum. Round this square, as at the Forum, is the chief temple, and several public edifices, remarkable above the others for the magnificence of their architecture. A fourth or fifth part of the inhabitants are sometimes assembled there at once. It is their parlour, kitchen and hall. Nobles, merchants, gondoliers, voiturins, servant-maids, and pick-pockets, all parade here together. There is hardly any other breathing place in the whole city ; for the streets, which there go by the name of Calle, are, like those of republican Rome, abominably narrow and nasty enough. *Et praetor medio cogitur ire caute.* No hired judges, but the benches filled with thirty and forty nobles at a time, whose very rank forces that burdensome office upon them, give some idea of the ancient Rome tribunals, the great deference of the people to their nobles recals to mind the pre-eminence of the senatorial dignity. The equality among these nobles, their dicacity, if I may use the expression, or affectation of sharp repartees, their jealousy of each other's popularity, their peremptoriness in obliging the mightiest to submit to the established laws, and the dictatorial and censorial authority assumed by their inquisitors of state in *tutoyant*, when they reprimand those of the highest rank, have all a great reference to old Rome. The parallel struck me in many other particulars; I could not help thinking that city a pygmean offspring of the great Patagonian. There were, beside myself, two other English travellers there, not reckoning Lord Bute, who kept himself quite retired, and Lord Baltimore, who was incognito to every one, excepting his own seraglio of Italians, Greeks, Blacks, etc.

'The two other English were Captain Wolefly, and

young Lyttelton, whose character puts me entirely in mind of what you told me of Thomson's opinion of his father. His mind is the most susceptible of delusive flattery of any that ever I met with; and, should others be silent, he will trumpet forth his own excellencies. If one desired to lead him, the grossest adulation would intoxicate him, and render him obedient as a lamb. He has naturally a prodigious fluency of elegant expressions, a sharp understanding in matters of taste and literature, and a very great talent in poetry, but his decisive tone runs beyond his judgment, and he is, or rather was a mere idolator of the wonderful Lord Chatham; for my recapitulation of the late war has lowered his sentiments a little. He ventured to play at Venice like a madman. He lost 1000 sequins in cash, and 2800 upon credit, which, in point of honour ought to have been paid within the 24 hours, but which still remains unpaid, and made him come away without taking leave, when I left Venice. He and I travelled together to Milan, and on the road he was very inquisitive about political matters and principles of finance, by which I discovered that his admiration of Lord Chatham was owing to youthful ignorance. About a fortnight after our arrival, his mistress arrived from Venice, when I left them, and came hither.

'At Milan I received the greatest politeness and civility from Count Firmian, the Governor, who understands and speaks English very well, knows our literature and publications better than hundreds of English gentlemen, has above five thousand English books in his library, and is as attentive to all the ups and downs in our political barometer as any British subject. He treats English travellers with the most courteous affability, and a kind of marked preference. The first day we dined with him, the whole conversation

at table was on English subjects, though among the company were some Frenchmen, particularly a counseiller de parlement de Paris, Germans, his own countrymen, Italians, and Poles.

'I think of leaving this place in five or six days, and of proceeding to Turin, where I may perhaps stay a fortnight, from thence I propose to embark on the Rhine for Holland. I was much obliged to you for your solid and judicious criticism on my sonnets. My present idle state makes me still now and then amuse myself with rhyming, and I lately made another song, designed for the last in the petit piece, when all is to end happily in a marriage. It is not in the French, but whether it will pass muster or not, I leave you to judge:

How cheering is the light of day
To those benighted on their way!
The sun with brighter rays appears,
And gayer beauties nature wears.
Thus I, who hopeless lately mourn'd,
Now find my grief to transport turn'd.
Ne'er let the heart that virtue sways
Despair of meeting prosperous days.
Ye maids, who would kind husbands gain,
Ye soldiers on the dusty plain,
Have my example in your eye,
Though sharp your duty, still comply.

'As I am not acquainted with any merchant at Leghorn, I hope you'll excuse my consigning to you the enclosed bill of lading, which you will get some of your mercantile friends to transact at the port. It is a commission I have received from England of a Parmesan cheese, for Thomas Calderwood, Esq., in Titchfield Street, Oxford-road, London; and as there was no ship from this port for London, I was advised to have it sent from Leghorn. The felucca sails for Leghorn to-day, or with the first opportunity.

The only English travellers here, beside myself are Lord Carmarthen and Mr. Crofts, who arrived this morning. The new play that has the run at London at present is a translation, or imitation, from Voltaire, by a Madame Cilesia of this place, daughter of Mr. Malet. With my best respects to Mrs. Smollett, to Mr. and Mrs. Renner, and Miss Fanny, I have the honour to be, most sincerely yours,

'JOHN GRAY.

'[P.S.]—I shall be happy to hear from you at Turin (*à la poste restante*), particularly to have the agreeable news of your health daily more confirmed. To the climate of Italy you must add exercise and relaxation of mind.'

John Gray to Tobias Smollett

'LONDON, *July* 8, 1771.

'Dear Sir,

'I am at length, after a long train of jading fatigues, arrived at my old lodgings at Turings, top of St. Martins-street, Leicester-fields, and having made one round to most of my acquaintances, though to many of them I may not be very pressing in a second visit, I now sit down to have the pleasure of conversing on paper with you, and of giving you a few notices of occurrences on this busy scene, which, to a person like me, who has no cares, is not half so charming, when in actual view, as it appeared at a distance to the longing imagination. A very cold June, inconvenient lodgings for the first fortnight, tenfold *tracasseries* at the London custom-house, where I expected to find the least, all contributed to diminish the idea of tranquility and repose that I had formed to myself here; but I hope things will mend as the season advances.

'I find not so great an alteration among men and things as I expected. The town is still augmenting, but not so rapidly as before. Durham Yard, now called the Adelphi, from the four brothers Adam, is not yet quite finished, but will be an additional ornament to that part. It is not formed into a square, but has one row to the water, upon a terrace twice as high as that of York Buildings and two rows parallel to that backwards, which form a street. They have advanced considerably in the new pavement; but not always skilfully. Blackfriars Bridge is finished, but that of Westminster hardly cedes the pass to it, and is by many preferred; each has its own excellencies, and the balance between them. Mylne, the architect, whom I met with, together with his young handsome wife, at a friend's house, is turned very fat, and would almost match Dr. Armstrong in the arrogance of an Aristarchus. He keeps an elegant chariot, but has been refused £4000 by the city, because he claimed it as a right; one or two other instances are likewise mentioned of his selling his opinion very dear.

'Dr. Armstrong has given, in the name of Launcelot Temple, a short journal of his trip to Italy, which is altogether trifling, and unworthy of him; it consists of 102 pages duodecimo, printed in the Shandean manner; so that the whole, when cast up, contains only about two-thirds of a sheet of the "Universal History". The following is an extract:

'"After having enjoyed about a fortnight of domestic happiness with a worthy old friend, in the agreeable society of two small families, who lived most cordially together on the side of Monte Nero, a romantic mountain, which affords a great variety of situation to a number of little valleys, and looks over the sea, at about the distance of four English

miles from Leghorn, I procured at last a place in a small vessel called a tartan, bound for Marseilles, where we arrived after a voyage of five days."

'I have some time since been informed, by an agreeable and worthy friend that by leaving Rome too soon I lost a favourable opportunity of being introduced to several persons of great distinction, particularly to one of the finest gentlemen of the age, at the same time a most elegant writer, both in prose and verse, with whom I might have enjoyed the honour and happiness of conversing, without the disgrace and awkward fatigue of murdering *any* language *one* is not accustomed to speak. This loss I consider as a serious misfortune, and shall lament it as long as I live. It might have been this misfortune I consider as a serious loss. Indeed, the style is equal to the barrenness of the matter; the critical reviewer has bestowed three lines upon it, and considers it as the last effort of expiring genius. He begins with telling how wearied he was with taking drugs, somewhat the same idea with Mr. Bramble, but O how different in the expression, by contrasting but the first ten lines of each.

'I have read the "Adventures of Humphry Clinker" with great delight, and think it calculated to give a very great run, and to add to the reputation of the author, who has, by the magic of his pen, turned the banks of Loch Lomond into classic ground. If I had seen the MS. I should like to have struck out the episode of Mr. Paunceford.[1] The strictures upon Aristarchus are but too just; shallow judges, I find, are not so well satisfied with the performance as the best judges, who are lavish in its praises. Your half-animated sots say they don't see the humour.

[1] *See* pp. 99-100 of this work.

Cleland[1] gives it stamp of excellence, with the enthusiastic emphasis of voice and fist; and puts it before anything you ever wrote. With many, I find, it has the effect of exciting inquiries about your other works, which they had not heard of before. I expected to have seen an account of it in both *Reviews*, but it is reserved for next month.

'We have, from Macpherson,[2] a quarto dissertation upon the first inhabitants of Britain and Ireland, in which there is very little new advanced; but he gives promises of continuing the history to more modern periods. The style is correct and animated; but there is rather an affectation of florid and poetical turns. He has a rival in one Mr. Henry,[3] a minister of Edinburgh, who has likewise given a quarto volume on the ancient Britons; in which there is much learned discussion, in a correct and critical manner in regard to population, taxation, commerce, arts, manners of life, etc. The style is lean and dry; but the practice of writing may, perhaps, give it more roundness and colouring, for he, likewise, promises a continuation. Macpherson's, when compared to this, appears to me like the florid essay of a collegian, placed beside a rational well-weighed discourse.

'In poetry, we may be said to have nothing new; but we have the mezzotint portrait of the poet Dr. Goldsmith, in the print-shop windows; it is in profile, from a painting of Reynolds, and resembles him greatly. Bell and Bob Smith both well; only

[1] ? John Cleland (1709–1789), novelist.

[2] John Macpherson, D.D., minister of Sleat; author of a work 'On the Caledonians, Picts, and British and Irish Scots' (1768).

[3] Robert Henry, D.D. (1718–1790), at this time minister of New Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh. The first volume of his History of England appeared in 1771.

the latter, by his belly, at present seems to stand a candidate for an alderman. Poor Delany[1] is gone down to Bath, far gone in a consumption. Drs. Brocklesby[2] and Elliott[3] have had a duel by pistols in Hyde-Park, from rivalship in their profession; the former alleging that the latter had filched a patient from him, or had talked derogatory of his skill. No harm was done on either side.

'Agriculture Mills,[4] who is rather stouter than ever I saw him, jaded me beyond measure, for an hour, with long, lying tales, trumpeting his own eulogiums, showing me, at the same time, proposals for a folio work, containing tables, for sixty years back, of all our exports and imports, which he had got leave to extract from the offices. Corbyn Morris[5] immediately published some very judicious strictures upon the proposals, showing that it would be the highest imprudence to expose such a detail to our neighbours, and that Mills had made most shallow and injudicious remarks in his manner of stating the balances, which he had exaggerated beyond measure; as, for example, saying, three and three

[1] This can scarcely be the Rev. Patrick Delany, husband of Mary Delany of the 'Autobiography', for, though he went to Bath in 1767, he died there in May of the following year—unless, indeed, the writer of this letter had not heard of his demise.

[2] Richard Brocklesby, M.D. (1722–1797), the friend of Dr. Johnson and Edmund Burke.

[3] Sir John Elliott, Bart., M.D. (1736–1786), knighted 1776; baronet, 1778; physician to the Prince of Wales. He married Grace Dalrymple (d. 1823) in 1771, who ran away with Lord Valentia three years later.

[4] John Mills, F.R.S. (d. 1784), author of a 'System of Practical Husbandry', 1767.

[5] Corbin Morris (d. 1779), Commissioner of Customs. The work to which reference is made is, 'Remarks upon Mr. Mills' Proposals for publishing a Survey of the Trade of Great Britain, Ireland and the Colonies' (1771).

makes six, when he should have said, three from three rests nothing. These remarks have brought a request from the Treasury to suspend publication; and Mills, for demanagement of his four years labour, is to content himself with being, in imagination, a Lord of Trade. While we were talking in the coffee-house, a gentleman came in from the tennis court, all in a sweat, and was received with the most humble reverences, or rather prostations, by Mills. I concluded it was some lord, in high office, but it turned out to be a clerk of one of the Boards. My Captain Bobadil immediately cut short in the middle of his boastings, and shrunk into the air and spirit of a lacquey.

'I had the pleasure of seeing Dr. Macculloch rosy, and in good health. He had been here for three weeks, and is returned to his paradise, at Ayr, where he keeps his coach, mows his own hay, etc. He inquired after you, and all your concerns, with his usual warmth. His chief employment here was eating and conversing with his friends; and one day that he dined in the city, he ordered a coach to be called, having quitted the company before they broke up. When he came to the door, it was not a hack, but a gentleman's equipage—to such a degree of elegance are arrived, not only one or two, but almost all our hackney coaches. It is the improvement that strikes me the most; and, if it were not for the number, the greater part could not be distinguished from equipages.

'Hamilton and Strahan[1] are both in good case, the former with such a smooth shining face, as makes him look younger than he appeared ten years ago. He told me that he had had a great deal to do to finish the translation relating to the "Universal History".

[1] William Strahan (1715–1785), printer and publisher.

'I am, myself, at present without employment, and almost without expectation; hope, however, does not desert my breast, and it even revives, the more I begin now to set very little by life: I have many very civil and very cold friends, but I have two very hearty ones, in two old pupils, Crauford and Ogilvy. The first is now possessor of Errol, his father being retired paralytic to Bath; but ten times his fortune would hardly suffice for his high schemes of expense. I am planning several things, but whether they will prove abortive time will discover. As I find my health greatly depends upon motion and exercise, my chief views are to get some active business, and another trip to Italy would not be disagreeable.

'When I last set out for Turin, I had, for companion, a very sensible and good-humoured Dane, who had made a fortune in the West Indies, and was returning to Copenhagen, from the tour of Italy. He was made a good deal like Dr. Hiffernan, only his belly was larger, and an awkward coat hung down to the calves of his legs. He told me, that, at Naples, he went to see a review, and, when he came upon the spot, he saw some officers tossing a gentleman in a blanket, and that the king was one who held the blanket. Soon after an officer came up to him smiling, and asked for his hat and sword, which he carried off, and kept for about ten minutes, and then restored them telling him that he had had very good luck. It seems his Sancho appearance had made them mark him out; but finding, by his speech, that he was really a foreigner, they had declined carrying their incivility so far as they intended. You see it is not without good cause that the Neapolitans call their king Matto.

'The passage of the Alps is only three hours' suffering, upon the top of a cold hill; the going up and down is nothing; and it is only one "Alp" that is to

be crossed, that stands, as a barrier, betwixt a valley on the south and a valley on the north, in which valleys all the rest of the road continues, and, with very little pains, a turnpike road, for wheel-carriages, might be made up, and over that mountain, by beginning to rise two miles lower down, and mounting aslant. Instead of that, they clamber directly, breast up, on the north side, and often slide down; but I chose to walk down. The roads in Savoy and Switzerland are exceeding good, nine or ten miles excepting. Geneva, nor its situation, did not much please me. It must be, beyond measure, cold in winter, as it stands on the south point of the lake, exposed to the sweeping north wind from the lake, hemmed in by rising ground on both sides. The face of the soil in Switzerland, is beautiful, owing to a great many woods of fir and pine, but the ground would be barren in almost any climate. Most of it is dead, hungry sand, that yields but little, even from the most assiduous labour of men, women, and children; yet there is no misery to be seen in the country. The exemption from war and taxes, and the savings of ages, allow even the poorest families to have some kind of stock, which they are under no temptation of dissipating or concealing, under the apprehension of rents being raised upon them, as in Scotland; or the tax-gatherer sweeping it away as in France.

'The situation of Basle is superior, I think, to that of any other city I ever saw. From thence to Metz is one continued plain, through which the Rhine flows gently. This plain, of Alsace, is very beautiful, but almost the whole is a barren sand, and the crops were miserably thin and poor. The inequality of conditions both in the French and German territory on this road, is but too visible. At Metz, where I embarked, my Dane left me, and about twelve miles below, the Rhine

is bounded, on both sides, by considerable hills, covered with vines, for about thirty or forty miles. Here its breadth is a little confined, and the declivity is so remarkable, that, in sitting in the boat, and looking forward for two or three miles, you plainly perceive yourself higher than the object before you. This declivity gives such a quickness to the current, that the French would call it *une rapide*, which, perhaps, is the translation of the word Rhine. After the river has passed this mountainous tract, it again flows, through an extensive plain, to Holland and the sea; but the soil through which it flows is always barren. The number of towns upon its banks, where it is confined by the mountains, is prodigious, and the situations are often, in the highest degree, picturesque. Holland did not at all answer my expectations; it is only a very extensive isle of bogs, or large swamps, without the least variety or ornament. The cities have too many trees in them, and the plains too few. There is the greatest neatness in the exterior of their cities; but the English houses, within, are not inferior, in cleanliness, to theirs. From Geneva to Holland the prices are high, and the expense of travelling is near double that of Italy. The beds on all the road, particularly in Switzerland, are excellent, and the eiderdown coverlets are excellent things for invalids. They have a most remarkable quality of promoting perspiration, and seem to suck out the morbid effluvia, as much as the Neapolitan stoves would do.

'My Dane and I hired a coach from Geneva to Metz, for nine guineas, and, on the Rhine, I went sixty leagues for sixteen shillings; but, as there were many people in the boat, we were far from being well accommodated at our landing place, and, to add to my misfortune, a crazy fellow of a German, who had been a tutor, but who had no more sense nor temper

than Sandy Lyon, joined himself as a companion for England, and, by his imprudence, my stock was exhausted, so that I had only one guinea when I arrived in Holland. Luckily, the ship sailed directly, and nothing was wanted till I should arrive at London.

'To-day, July 9th, I observe a new History of England soon to be published by Dr. Goldsmith, all for a guinea. I am told he now generally lives with his countryman, Lord Clare, who has lost his only son, Colonel Nugent.

'Your anecdotes about Quin (in "Humphry Clinker") are much relished. The following is another, which does him great honour: Being once highly diverted with something that a gentleman said in company, he swore he would leave him £1000, in his will. Accordingly, in the will was the following article: To Mr. A. B. for a *foolish promise* I once made, £1000. This deserves to be authenticated. The conduct of my rich namesake has been very different. He vaunted to all his old friends how much he had remembered them in his will; and, by the real will, he has left near £3000 a year among three grand-nephews, who have quitted their leather aprons to riot in affluence; and to his very old friend, Andrew Reid, who survived him but a few months, he left only £100, though to him he, in a manner, owed his all; for in the abridgment of the Philosophical Transactions, the labouring oar lay wholly upon Mr. Reid, both as to the science and the style. To his next forty years acquaintance, Dr. Murdoch, who had made *humble* mention of him in the "Life of Thomson", and who had rendered him essential service in the passing of his accounts, he has left nothing, though at the death of his wife he sent him a ring, which drew in Dr. Murdoch to lay a wager of a guinea, that though he might have no legacy, he should, at least, have a ring;

so the Doctor is a guinea out of pocket. I have a heavy accusation against you, of a needless work of supererogation, in paying the freight of Mr. Calderwood's cheese, which was a thing that ought naturally to have been paid here. I, on the contrary, not knowing that these things were paid per advance, especially to Italians, never scrupled to desire you to pay the freight to Leghorn, as I did not despair of living to have the pleasure of seeing you again, when I might clear the debt. Seriously, the franking the cheese was quite needless; but it has not hindered it from coming safe to hand.

'I offer my best respects to Mrs. Smollett, Mr. and Mrs. Renner, and Miss Fanny, and am, most sincerely, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

'JOHN GRAY.'

Chapter XIII

1771

'The Expedition of Humphry Clinker'—Death—Posthumous works—Isaac Disraeli's criticism—His heirs—His widow—Epitaphs.

The spring of the year 1771—the title-page of the first edition gives the date as 1761—saw the publication of Smollett's last novel, 'The Expedition of Humphry Clinker'. In this he is at his best: it is beyond question his masterpiece, and by it he as a writer of fiction stands or falls. There was little development in his art in 'Roderick Random', 'Peregrine Pickle', and 'Count Fathom', they might have been written in any order, and it would, indeed, be an acute critic who could give the order of their composition. The influence of 'Gil Blas' and 'Don Quixote' has gone, or has become so mellowed as to be almost negligible: in 'Humphry Clinker' there is, for the first time, pure Smollett. In 'Roderick Random' and 'Peregrine Pickle' the characters, with notable exceptions, are pegs upon which to hang adventures and often upon whom to play not very brilliant practical jokes. In 'Humphry Clinker' the characters are really the book: the incidents negligible. There are no ruffianly 'heroes', no preposterous 'Lady of Quality', very little love-making, and no lust whatsoever. Savage caricature has gone by the board, and as Dr. Saintsbury says

in one of his splendid 'Introductions', 'the old ill-temper (it was never actually misanthropy) though something like it breaks out now and then, is mellowed to good-natured satire'. Just a family party that relates its own very simple annals in its correspondence with friends. What a transition from the savagery of 'The History and Adventures of an Atom'!

There is Matthew Bramble, the Squire of Brambleton Hall, the kindest-hearted man in the world, but suffering from gout, is liable to splenetic outbursts—is it fanciful to think that in this character Smollett's sense of humour came to the rescue, and that he was poking fun at himself?

Here is a pleasant portrait of him at Bath by Bramble's nephew:

'Those follies that move my uncle's spleen excite my laughter. He is as tender as a man without a skin, who cannot bear the slightest touch without flinching. What tickles another would give him torment; and yet he has what we may call lucid intervals, when he is remarkably facetious.

'Indeed, I never knew a hypochondriac so apt to be infected with good humour. He is the most risible misanthrope I ever met with. A lucky joke, or any ludicrous incident, will set him a-laughing immoderately, even in one of his most gloomy paroxysms; and when the laugh is over, he will curse his own imbecility. In conversing with strangers, he betrays no marks of disquiet—he is splenetic with his familiars only; and not even with them while they keep his attention employed; but when his spirits are not exerted externally, they seem to recoil, and prey upon himself. He has renounced the waters with execration; but he finds a more efficacious, and,

certainly, a much more palatable remedy in the pleasures of society.'

Tabitha Bramble, who lives with her brother Matthew, and who rules the roost at Brambleton Hall, is a terror to the servants. In the intervals of husband-hunting, she feathers her nest at her brother's expense. Out of her own mouth she stands convicted of miserliness:

'Gwyn writes from Crickhowel, she tells the housekeeper at the Hall that the price of flannel is fallen three farthings an ell; and that's another good penny out of my pocket. When I go to market to sell, my commodity stinks; but when I want to buy the commonest thing, the owner pricks it under my nose, and it can't be had for love or money—I think everything runs cross at Brambleton Hall. You say the gander has broke the eggs, which is a phinumenon I don't understand; for when the fox carried off the old goose last year, he took her place and hatched the eggs, and partected the goslings like a tender parent. Then you tell me the thunder has soured two barrels of bear in the seller, I can't comprehend. Howsomever, I won't have the bear thrown out till I see with mine own eyes. Perhaps it will recover—at least it will serve for vinegar to the sarvants. I hope, Gwyllim, you'll take care there is no waste, and have an eye on the maids, and keep them to their spinning. I think they may go very well without bear in hot weather—it serves only to inflame the blood, and set them agog after the men: water will keep them cool and tamperit.'

There is Matthew's nephew, Jerry Melford, a pleasant enough, clean-living young man, about whom there is not much to say; and Jerry's sister, Lydia,

who, it must be confessed, is something of a lay-figure, obsessed by her love for a strolling-player, Wilson by name, and bleating out her simple little cries to her confidante that her family will not sanction such a marriage. Tabitha has with her a lady's maid, Mrs. (it is scarcely necessary to say that in those days spinsters were styled Mrs.) Winifred Jenkins, who is in constant communication with her friend, Mrs. Mary Jones, the Brambleton Hall housekeeper —many unconsciously amusing letters she is made to write. Later, Humphry Clinker comes upon the scene as a postillion, and is engaged as footman, a godly fellow, very unlike the male figures in Smollett's earlier books. Mrs. Jenkins falls for him at once, as she practically admits to Mrs. Jones:

'I could not rite by John Thomas, for because he went away in a huff, at a minute's warning. He and Chowder could not agree, and so they fitt upon the road, and Chowder bit his thumb, and he swore he would do him a mischief, and he spoke saucy to his mistress, whereby the Squire turned him off in gudgeon; and by God's providence we picked up another footman, called Umphry Klinker, a good sole as ever broke bread; which shows that a scalded cat may pruve a good mouser, and a hound be stanch, thof he has got narro hare on his buttocks; but the proudest nose may be bro't baor to the grindstone by sickness and misfortunes.'

The way in which each character gives his or her impressions of the rest is not only highly ingenious but is extraordinarily well done, and it is not at all to the detriment of the book if the manner of it was suggested by Anstey's 'New Bath Guide'. Not the least interesting of these accounts is that written from Clifton by Matthew to his physician, Dr. Lewis:

'My confinement is the more intolerable, as I am surrounded with domestic vexations. My niece has had a dangerous fit of illness, occasioned by that cursed incident at Gloucester, which I mentioned in my last. She is a poor good-natured simpleton, as soft as butter, and as easily melted—not that she's a fool—the girl's parts are not despicable, and her education has not been neglected; that is to say, she can write and spell, then she dances finely, has a good figure, and is very well inclined; but she's deficient in spirit, and so susceptible, and so tender, forsooth! Then there's her brother, Squire Jerry, a pert jackanapes, full of college petulance and self-conceit; proud as a German count, and as hot and hasty as a Welsh mountaineer. As for that fantastical animal my sister Tabitha, you are no stranger to her qualifications. I vow to God, she is sometimes so intolerable, that I almost think she's the devil incarnate, come to torment me for my sins; and yet I am conscious of no sins that ought to entail such family plagues upon me—why the devil should not I shake off these torments at once? I an't married to Tabby, thank Heaven! nor did I beget the other two. Let them choose another guardian; for my part, I an't in a condition to take care of myself, much less to superintend the conduct of giddy-headed boys and girls.'

The Bramble party just wanders hither and thither at its own sweet will—or, rather, the sour will of Tabitha, and is to be met with at the Hot Well, Bath; London (in 'lodgings at Mrs. Norton's in Golden Square'); Harrogate, Scarborough, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and elsewhere. There is not a ha'porth of story in the book until the very end when Smollett makes every one happy, impressing

into his service for that purpose, with delightful unrestraint, and, the reader may be sure, the long arm of coincidence. Thus, the strolling player, Wilson, turns out to be the son of Matthew's old friend, Squire Denison, and so gets his young lady without more ado; and Humphry proves to be, as, Mrs. Jenkins, whom he presently marries, puts it, a 'pye-blow' of Matthew himself; even Tabitha ends her search for a husband at the altar with Lismahago, with whom, it is charitably suggested, she lived happily ever after.

The absence of plot gives Smollett an opportunity to ramble to his heart's content. The accounts of Bath and the other watering-places are invaluable to the social historian of the period. He discourses about food, and the Southerner cannot but chuckle at his opinion of a favourite Scotch dish:

'I am not yet Scotchman enough to relish their singed sheep's-head and haggis, which were provided at our request one day at Mr. Mitchelson's, where we dined. The first put me in mind of the history of Congo, in which I had read of negroes' heads sold publicly in the markets; the last, being a mess of minced lights, livers, suet, oatmeal, onions, and pepper, enclosed in a sheep's stomach, had a very sudden effect upon mine, and the delicate Mrs. Tabby changed colour.'

There are descriptions of scenery—Lydia Melford is lyrical about Bristol, and Matthew about Scotland; there are dissertations on medical subjects, and comments on Ministers; the Liberty of the Press, with obvious reference to Wilkes and the *North Briton*; publishers; Roman Catholicism and Methodism; compliments to old friends; what not.

'Humphry Clinker' is so deliciously mature and kindly, as if the author, well aware that his end was near, was anxious to shake hands with all the world, friends and foes alike—politicians excepted—and bid it be of good cheer. The turbulent, truculent Smollett had gone. No longer did he trail his coat—and if he did, it might have been trodden on with impunity. No longer was his hand against every man: his fierce spirit was quenched. Hazlitt wrote of the book with unusual enthusiasm: 'Perhaps "Humphry Clinker" is, I do think, the most pleasant, gossiping novel that ever was written; that which gives the most pleasure with the least effort to the reader. It is quite as amusing as going the journey could have been; and we get just as good an idea of what happened on the road, as if we had been of the party. Humphry Clinker himself is exquisite; and his sweetheart, Winifred Jenkins, not much behind him. Matthew Bramble, though not altogether original, is excellently supported, and seems to have been the prototype of Sir Anthony Absolute in "The Rivals". But Lismahago is the flower of the flock. His tenaciousness in argument is not so delightful as the relaxation of his logical severity, when he finds his fortune mellowing in the wintry smiles of Mrs. Tabitha Bramble. This is the best preserved, and most severe of all Smollett's characters. The resemblance to Don Quixote is only just enough to make it interesting to the critical reader, without giving offence to any body else.' And five-and-twenty years after Hazlitt had written, Thackeray paid high tribute:

'Before us, and painted by his own hand, Tobias Smollett, the manly, kindly, honest and irascible; worn and battered, but still brave and full of heart, after a long struggle against a hard fortune. His

brain had been busied with a hundred different schemes; he had been reviewer and historian, critic, medical writer, poet, pamphleteer. He had fought endless literary battles, and braved and wielded for years the cudgels of controversy. It was a hard and savage fight in those days, and a niggard pay. He was oppressed by illness, age, narrow fortune; but his spirit was still resolute, and his courage steady; the battle over, he could do justice to the enemy with whom he had been so fiercely engaged, and gave a not unfriendly grasp to the hand that had mauled him. He is like one of those Scotch cadets, of whom history gives us so many examples, and whom, with a natural fidelity, the great Scotch novelist has painted so charmingly.'

With the publication of 'Humphry Clinker' Smollett's life's work was practically finished. He had been engaged on parts of the 'Universal History'. He had also been busy with a translation of 'The Adventures of Telemachus, the son of Ulysses', which was published in two volumes in 1776, and he had written an 'Ode to Independence', which was paid a high compliment by Sir Walter Scott—'the most characteristic of his poetical works. . . . The mythological commencement is eminently beautiful'. This was published in 1773 by Robert and Andrew Foulis, printers to Edinburgh University, with the following advertisement: 'The public may depend upon the authenticity of the following ode: it was printed from the author's manuscript, which was communicated to the editors by a person with whom Dr. Smollett was much connected.' The 'Notes and Observations' were written by Professor Richardson.

In 1785, a farce, 'The Israelites, or, The Pampered Nabob', was produced at Covent Garden Theatre, and

was attributed to Smollett. According to Dr. Anderson, 'it was brought upon the stage to ridicule a certain person who had been then lately exhibited, in caricature, at the print-shop windows, as an insect. It contained, it is said, many strokes of Smollett's peculiar humour, but owing to the severity of the weather it was very ill attended, and but indifferently received. It has not since been performed or printed.' Its authenticity is, however, more than doubtful.

Smollett died at Leghorn on September 17, 1771, at the early age of fifty. Of the last months of his life there is no record, and probably by his death-bed there were no others than his wife and the doctors. Pera, his physician, made the following note on his patient: 'Mr. Smollett, aged 50 years; man of historical talent: asthmatic, suffering from chronic colic, diarrhœa, convulsions, fever. Has vigour; passionate and fiery temperament; will not drink. Visited for the first time on the Saturday evening of the 14th September. On the 15th Dr. Garden ordered him vesicatories. He has a poisonous sore. They fancy that the new rooms of S. P. have infected him. His parents are healthy. He died from asthma and consumption without trying to help himself. He died in the night of September 17. He had been ordered a cordial of Rhine wine with cane sugar. A man of developed talents, suffering from the outrages of human life, almost a misanthrope. He lived eighteen years with his wife in perfect harmony, and by whom he had a daughter, who wrote poetry. Was of a very choleric disposition, but reflective, and devoted to political and historical study.'

The sadness of Smollett's life has been admirably depicted by Isaac Disraeli in 'Calamities of Literature':

'Of most "authors by profession", who has displayed a more fruitful genius and exercised more intense industry with a loftier sense of his independence than Smollett? But look into his life, and enter into his feelings, and you will be shocked at the disparity of his situation with the genius of the man. His life was a succession of struggles, vexations, and disappointments; yet of success in his writings. Smollett, who is a great poet, though he has written little in verse, and whose rich genius composed the most original pictures of human life, was compelled by his wants to debase his name by setting it to Voyages and Translations which he never could have read. When he had worn himself down in the service of the public, or the booksellers, there remained not, of all his slender remunerations, in the last stage of life, sufficient to convey him to a cheap country and a restorative air, on the Continent. The father may have thought himself fortunate, that the daughter whom he loved with more than common affection was no more to share in his wants; but the husband had by his side the faithful companion of his life, left without a wreck of fortune. Smollett gradually perishing in a foreign land, neglected by an admiring public and without fresh resources from the booksellers, who were receiving the income of his works—threw out his injured feelings in the character of Bramble, the warm generosity of his temper, but not his genius, seemed fleeting with his breath. Yet when Smollett died, and his widow in a foreign land was raising a plain monument over his dust, her love and her piety, but "made the little less". She perished in friendless solitude! Yet Smollett dead—soon an ornamented column is raised at the place of his birth, while the grave of the author seemed to multiply the editions of his works. There are indeed grateful feelings in the public at

large for a favourite author; but the awful testimony of those feelings by its gradual progress, must appear beyond the grave! They visit the column consecrated by his name, and his features are most loved, most venerated in the bust.'

Though Smollett kept a good heart, and showed a bold front to the world, there can be no doubt that his end was embittered by straitened means. Had he lived but a few years longer he would have inherited the estate of Bonhill, worth about £1000 a year, on the death of his cousin, James Smollett, whose heir of entail he was; and Dr. Anderson was under the impression that James Smollett 'would in all probability have bequeathed him what he could no longer retain, the rest of his fortune, of nearly the same value, both of which fell to his sister, Mrs. Telfer, who then assumed her maiden name. She survived until 1789, when the estate passed to her eldest son, Alexander Telfer of Symington, who assumed the name of Smollett.

It must have been distressful to Smollett that he could leave little or nothing to his widow. It would not appear that his relations gave her financial assistance, and she had practically to subsist on her own small income. What little property he left he had bequeathed to his wife, appointing as trustees Robert Graham of Gartmore and Mr. Bontein.

Mrs. Smollett, whose health was delicate, remained in Italy after the death of her husband, living in a humble way. So early as 1773 she was in dire straits, and wrote to Archibald Hamilton, proprietor of the *Critical Review*, asking him to remit her a hundred pounds to meet urgent wants. Some years later she was overwhelmed by an unexpected disaster—which was nothing less than the destruction of her property

in Jamaica. In the *London Chronicle* for September 12-14, 1782, appeared the following pathetic appeal:

'Fire at Jamaica.—Anne Smollett, Widow of the late Dr. Tobias Smollett, humbly begs leave to represent that by a letter received from her agent Mr. Angus Macbean, dated Kingston, 6th March 1782, she is informed of the melancholy misfortune befallen her by the late dreadful fire, which has entirely consumed her tenements and property at that place, and reduced her into the most deplorable state. Being in a foreign country, at a great distance from her native island, Jamaica, in a very infirm state of health, far advanced in years, and now deprived of every means of support; thus oppressed with grief; which such a dire and most unexpected stroke of Providence has caused her, she is under the necessity to recur to the known humanity and benevolence of her Country, and hopes she shall receive from their generosity such support as may enable her to finish with decency the few days which God may be pleased to spare her, and which will be employed in offering her prayers to the Supreme Being for his protection and happiness of her humane benefactors. Subscriptions are received at the following bankers, Sir Robert Herries & Co., St James's Street; Messrs Crofts, Devaynes, Dawes & Noble, Pall Mall; Lefevre Curries, James & Yellowley, Cornhill; and Sir William Lemon, Bart., Furley, Lubbock & Co, Mansion-house-street.'

The response to this appeal cannot have been very considerable, for writing from Leghorn on September 23, 1783, to Lewis Bull, a friend living at Bath, she said:

'The proofs you have given me of your desire to serve me, lay me under infinite obligations; and

in course, after the trouble you have taken for the benefit of one of the most unfortunate of women, you surely had reason to expect a letter of acknowledgment, and return of thanks to the benevolent persons who generously aided to my relief. Although I have not the honour to be personally known to you, the tender concern you express of my distresses, convinces me of the goodness of your heart for the misfortunes of a fellow-creature. To excuse my not answering yours sooner, I can only say, that when I received your kind favour, I was so totally absorbed in grief, from the dismal prospect of necessities in old age, as left me absolutely incapable of the least application. Happily, fortune placed me under the roof of very dear friends, who exerted their power to comfort me, and through their affection I owe my life and present support; otherwise I must have been abandoned in a foreign country, devoid of all resource. In my despair, I was advised to apply to the public. Flattered by the general character of our nation for deeds of charity, I acquiesced, hoping my sex and age would plead in my behalf, being reduced by an unavoidable calamity, which has entirely ruined me. Alas! I have been baffled in my expectations. Disappointment seems to attend my steps. This has truly humbled me, because I have seen many people assisted in less deplorable circumstances, when they had youth and strength to get a livelihood. Being absent from England, I could not make application to some powerful friends to support my cause. When this is wanting, which is the great wheel of fortune, the unhappy must sink down in oblivion. In short, my obligations are chiefly owing to the merchants of Leghorn, excepting my good friends of Bath, with a few particulars. Be it as it will, I must submit to my fate, hoping God will give me patience to bear

his will. I shall take it as a particular favour, you would offer my best respects to those good ladies, my benefactors, and assure them of my eternal remembrance of their compassion. Moreover, I return my sincere thanks for your kind attention. Wishing you health and prosperity, I beg leave to subscribe myself your most truly obliged humble servant,' etc.

In 1784 her friends at home realised her sad state. She was now living in the house of a merchant named Renner and his wife. Graham of Gartmore told James Cummyng, the antiquary, that she was entirely dependent on the charity of those good folk. 'Renner's humanity to her', he added, 'has been uniform, noble, and disinterested; but he is now upwards of seventy years of age, and his death, which in the course of nature, cannot be far distant, holds out a melancholy prospect to the lady, as his bounty for some time past has been her only support.' Graham and others organised a performance at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, of Otway's 'Venice Preserved' for her benefit, from which she derived some £300. The following prologue was written for the occasion by Graham:

Though lettered Rome and polish'd Greece could boast
The splendid table, and the courteous host,—
The rites to strangers due:—though poets sing
This mighty warrior or that powerful king,
The wand'rers friend—yet still, whate'er is told
By modern poets, or by bards of old,
Is rivall'd here:—for here with joy we see
The heart-felt bliss of heavenly charity!
See her, with rapture spread her willing hands,
And throw her blessings into foreign lands;
Dry up the tear she never saw flow,
And eager catch the distant sigh of woe.
In vain seas swell, and mountains rise in vain—
A widow's groans are heard across the main;

—A widow now!—Alas! how chang'd the day!—
Once the NARCISSA of our poet's lay;
Now, fatal change! (of ev'ry bliss bereft,
Nor child, nor friend, nor kind protector left),
Spreads on a distant shore her scanty board,
And humbly takes what strangers can afford.
Yet link'd to you by ev'ry tender tie,
To you she lifts the long-dejected eye,
And thus she speaks 'Who dar'd with manly rage,
To lash, the vices of an impious age?
Who dar'd to seize the bold historic pen,
Paint living kings, and ministers as men?
Who sung sad Scotia's hapless state forlorn,
Her broken peace, her freshest laurels torn?
Or who, on oaten reed, by Leven's side,
Sung the fair stream, and hail'd the dimpling tide?
Or who?—say ye, for such, I'm sure are here,
Whose honest bosoms never yet knew fear;
Sons of the north, who stem corruption's tide,
Your country's honour, and your nation's pride—
Lords of the lion heart and eagle eye,
Who heeds no storm that howls along the sky—
Say ye—whose lyre to manly numbers strung,
The glorious bliss of independence sung?
Who felt that power, and still ador'd his shrine?—
It was your SMOLLETT! Oh! he once was mine!'
Tears stopp'd her utterance, else she would have said,
'Like him be bold, in virtue undismay'd;
Let independence all your actions guide,
Your surest patron, and your noblest pride.'

James Smollett of Bonhill, who does not seem to have held out a helping hand while his cousin was living, and made no provision for his cousin's widow, did, however, after the death of his famous relation make a note in his settlement of March 1773 authorising an expenditure of seventy guineas for the purpose of a monument on the banks of the Leven to his memory, which ultimately took the form of a column of the Tuscan order, surmounted by an urn.

A monument to Smollett's memory was erected

by his widow at Leghorn; with an inscription by his old friend, Dr. Armstrong:

Hic ossa conduntur
TOBIÆ SMOLLETT, Scoti;

Qui, prosapia generosa et antiqua natus,
Priscæ virtutis exemplar emicuit;
Aspectu ingenuo,
Corpore valido,
Pectore animoso,
Indole apprime benigna,
Et fere supra facultates munifica,
Insignis.

Ingenio feraci, faceto, versatili,
Omnigenæ fere doctrinæ mire capaci,
Varia fabularum dulcedine,
Vitam moresque hominum,
Ubertate summa ludens, depinxit.
Adverso, interim, nefas! tali tantoque alumno
Nisi quo satyræ opipare supplebat,
Seculo impio, ignavo, fatuo,
Quo musæ vix nisi nothæ
Mecænatulis Britannicis
Fovebantur.
In memoriam
Optimi et amabilis omnino viri,
Permultis amicis desiderati,
Hocce marmor
Dilectissima simul et amantissima conjux

L. M.
Sacravit.

Dr. John Armstrong to Mrs. Smollett, at Leghorn

'London, *January* 19, 1775.

'My Dear Madam,

'You needed not have made so many apologies for your seeming neglect; for I could not, consistently with my knowledge of the politeness natural to you,

impute it to anything but the real cause; the neglect of people entrusted with the conveyance; which happens so often, that I am afraid this scrawl may never reach you. After passing a fortnight most agreeably with you at Monte Nero, where I was really ashamed of some part of the attention paid to me, upon my arrival at Paris I wrote my dear worthy friend a long letter; and to avoid as much as possible all chance of a miscarriage, delivered it to the post myself: that it never arrived is a most severe mortification to me, as I find by your letter it hurt him so much, and must have hurt me in his honest generous mind, under the idea of a faithless deserter from a friend whom I loved, esteemed, and admired. Bless me, dear Madam, how could I possibly take umbrage at any behaviour I met with at Monte Nero, where I found everything perfectly agreeable, kind, and obliging to the utmost degree. In short, the fortnight I passed with you there is one of the favourite morsels of my life.

'But I am going to tell you that I have some reason to complain of the Doctor's cousin, Commissary Smollett's behaviour, upon a certain occasion. Sometime after the news of my dear friend's death arrived, I received a letter from the Commissary, acquainting me that you had desired him to send something by way of inscription for the tomb you proposed to raise to his memory, and requesting me to perform that friendly office. I accepted the task with particular pleasure, and sent him the inscription, a copy of which I afterwards sent to you. He received it with the strongest expressions of approbation; but I have been told since he has set up a stone at Bonhill to the Doctor's memory, with a quite different inscription, which, they say, is insipid and stupid enough, though I suppose he sent it to be put up at Leghorn too.

However, this misbehaviour as I cannot help calling it, cannot deprive me of the satisfaction of having performed the duty to my worthy friend's memory.

'I beg my respects to Mr. and Mrs. Renner, to Sir J. Dick and his lady, and am, my dear madam, your sincere friend and faithful humble servant,

'JOHN ARMSTRONG.'

James Smollett presently invited Professor George Stewart, of Edinburgh, and John Ramsay, of Ochtertyre, to prepare another inscription. Evidently, he was anxious that it should be in the best possible style, and when Dr. Johnson in October 1773 visited him, he was desired to revise the wording.

'By the side of the high road to Glasgow, at some distance from the house, he had erected a pillar to the memory of his ingenious kinsman, Dr. Smollett; and he consulted Dr. Johnson as to an inscription for it,' so runs a passage in the 'Journey to the Hebrides'. 'Lord Kames, who, though he had a great store of knowledge, with much ingenuity, and uncommon activity of mind, was no profound scholar, had, it seems, recommended an English inscription. Dr. Johnson treated this with great contempt, saying, "An English inscription would be a disgrace to Dr. Smollett"; and, in answer to what Lord Kames had urged, as to the advantage of its being in English, because it would be generally understood, I observed, that all to whom Dr. Smollett's merit could be an object of respect and imitation, would understand it as well in Latin; and that surely it was not meant for the Highland drovers, or other such people, who pass and repass that way. We were then shown a Latin inscription, proposed for this monument.

Dr. Johnson sat down with an ardent and liberal earnestness to revise it.'[1]

The alterations Johnson made are indicated in italics:

Siste, viator!
Si leporis, ingeniique venam benignam,
Si morum callidissimum pictorem,
Unquam es miratus,
Immorare paululum memoriæ,
TOBIÆ SMOLLETT, M.D.
Viri virtutibus hisce
Quas in homine et cive
Et laudes et imiteris,
Haud mediocriter ornati:
Qui in literis variis versatus,
Postquam, felicitate sibi propria,
Sese posteris commendaverat,
Morte acerba raptus
Anno ætatis 51.
Eheu! quam procul a patria!
Prope Liburni portum in Italia,
Jacet sepultus,
Tali tantoque viro, patruelo suo.
Cui in decursu lampada
Se potius tradidisse decuit,
Hanc Columnam,
Amoris, eheu! inane monumentum,
In ipsis Leviniæ ripis,
Quas versiculis sub exitu vitæ illustratas,
Primis infans vagitibus personuit,
Ponendam curavit
JACOBUS SMOLLETT de Bonhill.
Abi, et reminiscere,
Hoc quidem honore,
Non modo defuncti memoriæ,
Verum etiam exemplo, prospectum esse:
Aliis enim, si modo digni sint,
Idem erit virtutis præmium!

[1] Boswell, 'Life of Johnson' (ed. Hill), v. 366.

APPENDICES

I

PREFACE TO 'THE REGICIDE, OR, JAMES THE FIRST OF SCOTLAND'

A Tragedy

Whatever reluctance I have to trouble the public with a detail of the mortifications I have suffered, in my attempts to bring the ensuing performance on the stage, I think it a duty incumbent upon me, to declare my reasons for presenting it in this extraordinary manner; and, if the explanation shall be found either tedious or trifling, I hope the candid reader will charge my impertinence upon those who drove me to the necessity of making such an ineffectual appeal.

Besides, I flatter myself, that a fair representation of the usage I have met with will be as a beacon to caution other inexperienced authors against the insincerity of managers, to which they might otherwise become egregious dupes; and after a cajoling dream of good fortune, wake in all the aggravation of disappointment.

Although I claim no merit from having finished a tragedy at the age of eighteen, I cannot help thinking myself entitled to some share of indulgence for the humility, industry, and patience I have exerted during a period of ten years, in which this unfortunate production hath been exposed to the censure of critics of all degrees; and in consequence of their several opinions, altered, and (I hope) amended, times without number.

Had some of those who were pleased to call themselves my friends been at any pains to deserve the character, and told me ingenuously what I had to expect in the capacity of an author, when I first professed myself of that venerable fraternity, I should in all probability, have spared myself the incredible labour and chagrin I have since undergone: but, as early as the year 1739, my play was taken into the protection of one of those little fellows who are sometimes called great men; and, like other orphans, neglected accordingly.

Stung with resentment, which I mistook for contempt, I resolved to punish this barbarous indifference, and actually discarded my patron; consoling myself with the barren praise of a few associates, who, in the most indefatigable manner, employed their time and influence in collecting from all quarters observations on my piece, which, in consequence of these suggestions, put on a new appearance almost every day, until my occasions called me out of the kingdom.

Soon after my return, I and my production were introduced to a late patentee of courteous memory, who (rest his soul!) found means to amuse me a whole season, and then declared it impracticable to bring it on till next year; advising me to make my application more early in the winter, that we might have time to concert such alterations as should be thought necessary for its successful appearance on the stage. But I did not find my account in following this wholesome advice; for, to me, he was always less and less at leisure. In short, after sundry promises, and numberless evasions, in the course of which he practised upon me the whole art of procrastination, I demanded his final answer, with such obstinacy and warmth, that he could no longer resist my importunity,

and refused my tragedy in plain terms. Not that he mentioned any material objections to the piece itself, but seemed to fear my interest was not sufficient to support it in the representation; affirming, that no dramatic composition however perfect, could succeed with an English audience by its own merit only; but must entirely depend upon a faction raised in its behalf. Incensed at this unexpected declaration, I reproached him bitterly for having trifled with me so long; and like my brother Bayes, threatened to carry my performance to the other house.

This was actually my intention, when I was given to understand by a friend, that a nobleman of great weight had expressed an inclination to peruse it; and that, as interest was requisite, I could not do better than gratify his desire with all expedition. I committed it accordingly to the care of my counsellor, who undertook to give me a good account of it in less than a fortnight: but four months elapsed before I heard any tidings of my play; and then it was retrieved by pure accident (I believe) from the most dishonourable apartment of his Lordship's house.

Enraged at the behaviour of this supercilious peer, and exceedingly mortified at the miscarriage of all my efforts, I wreaked my resentment upon the innocent cause of my disgraces, and forthwith condemned it to oblivion, where, in all probability, it would have for ever slept, like a miserable abortion, had not a young gentleman of learning and taste waked my paternal sense, and persuaded me not only to rescue it from the tomb, where it had lain two whole years, but also to new model the plan, which was imperfect and undigested before, and mould it into a regular tragedy, confined within the unities of the drama.

Thus improved, it fell into the hands of a gentle-

man who had wrote for the stage, and happened to please him so much, that he spoke of it very cordially to a young nobleman, since deceased, who, in the most generous manner, charged himself with the care of introducing it to the public; and in the meantime, honoured me with his own remarks, in conformity to which it was immediately altered, and offered by his Lordship to the new manager of Drury Lane Theatre. It was about the latter end of the season when this candid personage, to whom I owe many obligations for the exercises of patience he has set me, received the performance, which, some weeks after, he returned, assuring my friend that he was pre-engaged to another author, but if I could be prevailed upon to reserve it till the ensuing winter, he would bring it on. In the interim, my noble patron left London, whither he was doomed never to return; and the conscientious manager next season, instead of fulfilling his own promise and my expectation, gratified the town with the production of a player, the fate of which everybody knows.

I shall leave the reader to make his reflections on this event, and proceed to relate the other particulars of fortune, that attended my unhappy issue, which in the succeeding spring, had the good luck to acquire the approbation of an eminent wit, who proposed a few amendments, and recommended it to a person, by whose influence, I laid my account with seeing it appear at last, with such advantage as should make ample amends for all my disappointments.

But here I too reckoned without my host. The master of Covent Garden Theatre bluntly rejected it, as a piece altogether unfit for the stage; even after he had told me, in presence of another gentleman, that he believed he should not venture to find fault with any performance which had gained the good

opinion of the honourable person who approved and recommended my play.

Baffled in every attempt, I renounced all hopes of its seeing the light, when a humane lady of quality interposed, so urgently in its behalf, with my worthy friend, the other manager, that he very complacently received it again, and had recourse to the old mystery of protraction, which he exercised with such success, that the season was almost consumed before he could afford it a reading. My patience being by this time quite exhausted, I desired a gentleman, who interested himself in my concerns, to go and expostulate with the vaticide: and, indeed, this piece of friendship he performed with so much zeal, upbraiding him with his evasive and presumptious behaviour, that the sage politician was enraged at his reprimand, and in the mettle of his wrath, pronounced my play a wretched piece, deficient in language, sentiment, character and plan. My friend, who was surprised at the hardiness and severity of this sentence, asking how he came to change his opinion, which had been more favourable when the tragedy was first put into his hands; he answered his opinion was not altered, neither had he ever uttered an expression in its favour.

This was an unlucky assertion, for the other immediately produced a letter which I had received from the young nobleman two years before, beginning with these words:

'Sir, I have received Mr. L——'s answer; who says he thinks your play has indubitable merit, but has prior promises to Mr. T——n, that as an honest man, cannot be evaded.' And concluding thus, 'As the manager has promised me the choice of the season next year, if you'll be advised by me, rest it with me.'

After having made some remarks suitable to the

occasion, my friend left him to chew the cud of reflection, the result of which was a message to my patroness, importing (with many expressions of duty) that neither the circumstances of his company, nor the advanced season of the year, would permit him to obey her command, but if I would wait till next winter, and during the summer, make such alterations as I had agreed to, at a conference with some of his principal performers, he would assuredly put my play in rehearsal, and in the meantime give me an obligation in writing, for my further satisfaction. I would have taken him at his word, without hesitation, but was persuaded to dispense with the proffered security, that I might not seem to doubt the influence or authority of her ladyship. The play, however, was altered and presented to this upright director, who renounced his engagement, without the least scruple, apology, or reason assigned.

Thus have I in the most impartial manner (perhaps too circumstantially) displayed the conduct of those playhouse managers with whom I have had any concern, relating to my tragedy: and whatever disputes have happened between the actors and me, are suppressed as frivolous animosity unworthy of the reader's attention.

Had I suffered a repulse when I first presented my performance, I should have had cause to complain of my being excluded from that avenue to the public favour, which ought to lie open to all men of genius; and how far I deserve that distinction, I now leave the world to decide, after I have, in justice to myself, declared that my hopes of success were not derived from the partial applause of my friends only, but inspired (as some of my greatest enemies know) by the approbation of persons of the first note in the republic of taste, whose countenance, I vainly imagined,

would have been an effectual introduction to the stage.

Be that as it will, I hope the unprejudiced observer will own, with indignation and disdain, that every disappointment I have endured was an accumulated injury; and the whole of my adversary's conduct, a series of the most unjustifiable equivocation and insolent absurdity; for though he may be excusable in refusing a work of this kind, either on account of his ignorance or discernment, surely, neither the one nor the other can vindicate his dissimulation and breach of promise to the author.

Abuse of prerogative, in matters of greater importance, prevails so much at present, and is so generally overlooked, that it is almost ridiculous to lament the situation of authors, who must either at once forego all opportunities of acquiring reputation in dramatic poetry, or humble themselves, so as to sooth the pride, and humour the petulance of a mere Goth, who, by the most preposterous delegation of power, may become the arbiter of this kind of writing.

Nay, granting that a bard is willing to prostitute his talents so shamefully, perhaps he may never find an occasion to practise this vile condescension to advantage: for after he has gained admission to a patentee (who is often more difficult of access than a sovereign prince) and even made shift to remove all other objections, an insurmountable obstacle may be raised by the manager's avarice, which will dissuade him from hazarding a certain expense on an uncertain issue, when he can fill his theatre without running any risk, or disobliging his principal actors by putting them to the trouble of studying new parts.

Besides, he will be apt to say within himself, 'If I must entertain the town with variety it is but natural that I should prefer productions of my friends, or

of those who have any friends worth obliging, to the works of obscure strangers, who have nothing to recommend them but a doubtful superiority of merit, which in all likelihood will never rise in judgment against me.'

That such have been the reflections of patentees, I believe no man of intelligence and veracity will deny; and I will venture to affirm, that on the strength of interest or connection with the stage, some people have commenced dramatic authors, who otherwise would have employed their faculties in exercises better adapted to their capacity.

After what has been said, anything by way of application would be an insult on the understanding of the public, to which I owe, and acknowledge the most indelible obligation for former favours as well as for the uncommon encouragement I have received in the publication of the following play.

II

PREFACE TO 'THE ADVENTURES OF RODERICK RANDOM'

Of all kind of satire there is none so entertaining and universally improving, as that, which is introduced, as it were, occasionally, in the course of an interesting story, which brings every incident home to life; and, by representing familiar scenes in an uncommon and amusing point of view invests them with all the graces of novelty, while nature is appealed to in every particular.

The reader gratifies his curiosity in pursuing the adventures of a person in whose favour he is prepossessed; he espouses his cause, he sympathises with him in distress; his indignation is heated against the authors of his calamity; the humane passions are inflamed; the contrast between dejected virtue and insulting vice appears with greater aggravation; and every impression having a double force on the imagination, the memory retains the circumstance, and the heart improves by the example. The attention is not tired with a bare catalogue of characters, but agreeably diverted with all the variety of invention; and the vicissitudes of life appear in their peculiar circumstances, opening an ample field for wit and humour.

Romance, no doubt, owes its origin to ignorance, vanity, and superstition. In the dark ages of the world, when a man had rendered himself famous for wisdom or valour, his family and adherents availed

themselves of his superior qualities, magnified his virtues, and represented his character and person as sacred and supernatural. The vulgar easily swallowed the bait, implored his protection, and yielded the tribute of homage and praise even to adoration; his exploits were handed down to posterity with a thousand exaggerations; they were repeated as incitements to virtue; divine honours were paid, and altars erected to his memory, for the encouragement of those who attempted to imitate his example, and hence arose the heathen mythology, which is no other than a collection of extravagant romances. As learning advanced, and genius received cultivation, these stories were embellished with the graces of poetry; that they might the better recommend themselves to the attention, they were sung in public, at festivals, for the instruction and delight of the audience; and rehearsed before battle, as incentives to deeds of glory. Thus tragedy and the epic muse were born, and, in the progress of taste, arrived at perfection. It is no wonder that the ancients could not relish a fable in prose, after they had seen so many remarkable events celebrated in verse, by their best poets; we, therefore, find no romance among them during the era of their excellence, unless the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon may be so called; and it was not till arts and sciences began to revive, after the irruption of the Barbarians into Europe, that anything of this kind appeared. But when the minds of men were debauched, by the imposition of priestcraft, to the most absurd pitch of credulity, the authors of romance arose, and, losing sight of probability, filled their performances with the most monstrous hyperboles. If they could not equal the ancient poets in point of genius, they were resolved to excel them in fiction, and apply to the wonder rather than the judgment of their readers.

Accordingly, they brought necromancy to their aid, and instead of supporting the character of their heroes by dignity of sentiment and practice, distinguished them by their bodily strength, activity, and extravagance of behaviour. Although nothing could be more ludicrous and unnatural than the figures they drew, they did not want patrons and admirers, and the world actually began to be infected with the spirit of knight-errantry, when Cervantes, by an inimitable piece of ridicule, reformed the taste of mankind, representing chivalry in the right point of view, and converting romance to purposes far more useful and entertaining, by making it assume the sock, and point out the follies of ordinary life.

The same method has been practised by other Spanish and French authors, and by none more successfully than by Monsieur Le Sage, who, in his 'Adventures of Gil Blas', has described the knavery and foibles of life, with infinite humour and sagacity. The following sheets I have modelled on his plan, taking the liberty, however, to differ from him in the execution, where I thought his particular situations were uncommon, extravagant, or peculiar to the country in which the scene is laid. The disgraces of Gil Blas are, for the most part, such as rather excite mirth than compassion: he himself laughs at them; and his transitions from distress to happiness, or at least ease, are so sudden, that neither the reader has time to pity him, nor himself to be acquainted with affliction. This conduct, in my opinion, not only deviates from probability, but prevents that generous indignation which ought to animate the reader against the sordid and vicious disposition of the world.

I have attempted to represent modest merit struggling with every difficulty to which a friendless orphan is exposed, from his own want of experience,

as well as from the selfishness, envy, malice, and base indifference of mankind. To secure a favourable prepossession, I have allowed him the advantage of birth and education, which, in the series of his misfortunes, will, I hope, engage the ingenuous more warmly in his behalf; and though I foresee that some people will be offended at the mean scenes in which he is involved, I persuade myself the judicious will not only perceive the necessity of describing those situations to which he must of course be confined, in his low state, but also find entertainment in viewing those parts of life, where the humours and passions are undisguised by affectation, ceremony, or education; and the whimsical peculiarities of disposition appear as nature has implanted them. But I believe I need not trouble myself in vindicating a practice authorised by the best writers in this way, some of whom I have already named.

Every intelligent reader will, at first sight, perceive I have not deviated from nature in the facts, which are all true in the main, although the circumstances are altered and disguised, to avoid personal satire.

It now remains to give my reasons for making the chief personage of his work a North Briton; which are chiefly these: I could at a small expense bestow on him such education as I thought the dignity of his birth and character required, which could not possibly be obtained in England, by such slender means as the nature of the plan would afford. In the next place, I could represent simplicity of manners in a remote part of my kingdom, with more propriety, than in any other place near the capital; and, lastly, the disposition of the Scots, addicted to travelling, justifies my conduct in deriving an adventurer from that country.

That the delicate reader may not be offended at the unmeaning oaths, which proceed from the mouths of

some persons in these memoirs, I beg leave to premise, that I imagined nothing could more effectually expose the absurdity of such miserable expletives than a natural and verbal representation of the discourse in which they occur.

III

PREFATORY ADDRESS TO 'THE ADVENTURES OF FERDINAND COUNT FATHOM'

To Doctor ——

You and I, my good friend, have often deliberated on the difficulty of writing such a dedication as might gratify the self-complacency of a patron, without exposing the author to the ridicule or censure of the public; and I think we generally agreed that the task was altogether impracticable. Indeed, this was one of the few subjects on which we have always thought in the same manner. For, notwithstanding that deference and regard which we mutually pay to each other, certain it is, we have often differed, according to the predominancy of those different passions, which frequently warp the opinion, and perplex the understanding of the most judicious.

In dedication, as in poetry, there is no medium; for, if any one of the human virtues be omitted in the enumeration of the patron's good qualities, the whole address is construed into an affront, and the writer has the mortification to find his praise prostituted to very little purpose.

On the other hand, should he yield to the transports of gratitude or affection, which is always apt to exaggerate, and produce no more than the genuine effusions of his heart, the world will make no allowance for the warmth of his passion, but ascribe the praise he bestows to interested views and sordid adulation.

Sometimes too, dazzled by the tinsel of a character which he has no opportunity to investigate, he pours forth the homage of his admiration upon some false Maecenas, whose future conduct gives the lie to his eulogium, and involves him in shame and confusion of face. Such was the fate of a late ingenious author, who was so often put to the blush for the undeserved incense he had offered in the heat of an enthusiastic disposition, misled by popular applause, that he had resolved to retract, in his last will, all the encomiums which he had prematurely bestowed, and stigmatise the unworthy by name—a laudable scheme of poetical justice, the execution of which was fatally prevented by untimely death.

Whatever may have been the fate of other dedicators, I for my own part, sit down to write this address, without any apprehension of disgrace or disappointment; because I know you are too well convinced of my affection and sincerity to repine at what I shall say touching your character and conduct. And you will do me the justice to believe, that this public distinction is a testimony of my particular friendship and esteem.

Not that I am either insensible of your infirmities, or disposed to conceal them from the notice of mankind. There are certain foibles which can only be cured by shame and mortification ; and whether or not yours be of that species, I shall have to think my best endeavours were used for your reformation.

Know then, I can despise your pride, while I honour your integrity, and applaud your taste, while I am shocked at your ostentation. I have known you trifling, superficial, and obstinate in dispute; meanly jealous and awkwardly reserved; rash and haughty in your resentments, and coarse and lowly in your connexions. I have blushed at the weakness of your conversation, and trembled at the errors of your

conduct—yet, as I own you possess certain good qualities which overbalance these defects, and distinguish you on this occasion as a person for whom I have the most perfect attachment and esteem, you have no cause to complain of the indelicacy with which your faults are reprehended. And as they are chiefly the excesses of a sanguine disposition and looseness of thought, impatient of caution or control, you may, thus stimulated, watch over your own intemperance and infirmity with redoubled vigilance and consideration, and for the future profit by the severity of my reproof.

These, however, are not the only motives that induce me to trouble you with this public application. I must not only perform my duty to my friends, but also discharge the debt I owe to my own interest. We live in a censorious age; and an author cannot take too much precaution to anticipate the prejudice, misapprehension, and temerity of malice, ignorance, and presumption.

I therefore think it incumbent upon me to give some previous intimation of the plan which I have executed in the subsequent performance that I may not be condemned upon partial evidence, and to whom can I with more propriety appeal in my explanation than to you, who are so well acquainted with all the sentiments and emotions of my breast.

A novel is a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life, disposed in different groups, and exhibited in various attitudes, for the purposes of an uniform plan, and general occurrence to which every individual figure is subservient. But this plan cannot be executed with propriety, probability, or success, without a principal personage to attract the attention, unite the incidents, unwind the clue of the labyrinth, and at last close the scene, by virtue of his own importance.

Almost all the heroes of this kind, who have hitherto succeeded on the English stage, are characters of transcendent worth, conducted through the vicissitudes of fortune, to that goal of happiness, which ever ought to be the repose of extraordinary desert. Yet the same principle by which we rejoice at the remuneration of merit, will teach us to relish the disgrace and discomfiture of vice, which is always an example of extensive use and influence, because it leaves a deep impression of terror upon the minds of those who were not confirmed in the pursuit of morality and virtue, and, while the balance wavers, enables the right scale to preponderate.

In the drama, which is a more limited field of invention, the chief personage is often the object of our detestation and abhorrence; and we are as well pleased to see the wicked schemes of a Richard blasted, and the perfidy of a Maskwell exposed, as to behold a Bevil happy, and an Edward victorious.

The impulses of fear, which is the most violent and interesting of all the passions, remain longer than any other upon the memory; and for one that is allured by virtue, by the contemplation of that peace and happiness which it bestows, a hundred are deterred from the practices of vice, by the infamy and punishment to which it is liable, from the laws and regulations of mankind.

Let me not, therefore, be condemned for having chosen my principal character from the purlieus of treachery and fraud, when I declare my purpose is to set him up as a beacon for the benefit of the unexperienced and unwary, who, from the perusal of these memoirs, may learn to avoid the manifold snares with which they are continually surrounded in the paths of life; while those who hesitate on the brink of iniquity may be terrified from plunging into the

irremediable gulf, by surveying the deplorable fate of Ferdinand Count Fathom.

That the mind might not be fatigued, nor the imagination disgusted, by a succession of vicious objects, I have endeavoured to refresh the attention with occasional incidents of a different nature; and raised up a virtuous character, in opposition to the adventurer, with a view to amuse the fancy, engage the affection, and form a striking contrast which might heighten the expression, and give a *relief* to the moral of the whole.

If I have not succeeded in my endeavours to unfold the mysteries of fraud, to instruct the ignorant, and entertain the vacant; if I have failed in my attempts to subject folly to ridicule, and vice to indignation; to rouse the spirit of mirth, wake the soul of compassion, and touch the secret springs that move the heart; I have, at least, adorned virtue with honour and applause, branded iniquity with reproach and shame, and carefully avoided every hint or expression which could give umbrage to the most delicate reader—circumstances which (whatever may be my fate with the public) will with you always operate in favour of,

Dear Sir, your very affectionate friend and servant,

THE AUTHOR.

IV

KEY

TO

'THE HISTORY AND ADVENTURES OF AN ATOM'

THE first 'Key' was printed by William Davis in his 'Second Journey round the Library of a Bibliomaniac' (1825). Another by Thomas Seccombe is given in Henley's edition of Smollett's Works. In 1925 a third 'Key' was compiled by the Editors of the edition of Smollett's Works published by Messrs. Basil Blackwell of Oxford. The present writer is responsible for the 'Key' here printed.

A[bercromb]y . . .	*See* Abra-moria.
Ab-ren-thi . . .	John Abernethy (1680–1740).
Abra-moria . . .	General Sir Ralph Abercrombie
A[dministratio]n . .	
Amazon of Ostrog . .	Maria Theresa.
Amazonian Princess . .	*See* Ostrog, Princess of.
Apothecary . . .	Dr. John Hill.
Astrog	Austria.
Banyan merchant . .	*See* Thum-Khummqua.
B——n	William, second Viscount Barrington.
Bha-Kakh	Admiral Sir George Pocock.
Bihn-gop	Admiral John Byng.
Bonzas	Clergy.
Bron-xi-tic . . .	Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick.
Brut-an-tiffi . . .	Frederick the Great.
Bupo	George I.

Buponian Creed	Hanoverian Policy.
Cambadoxi	Cambridge.
Cambodia	Sardinia.
Celebrated General	Count von Daun.
Certain treaty	Utrecht.
China	France.
China Fort	Louisbourg.
Chinese pilot	Thierry, defender of Rochefort.
Conservator of the Signet	William Pitt.
Corea	Spain.
Council of the Twenty-eight	Privy Council.
Cuboy	Prime Minister.
Crazy Hogshead	Alderman William Beckford.
Diario	King.
Domains	Saxony.
Fakku-basi	House of Hanover.
Fan-yah	Havana.
Fas-Khan	Admiral the Hon. Edward Boscawen.
Fastissian tax	The Stamp Act.
Fatsissio	America.
Fatzman	Duke of Cumberland.
Fi-de-ta-da	General Lord Blakeney.
Fiki-kaka	Thomas, first Duke of Newcastle.
Fishery	Newfoundland.
Fla-sao	Plassey.
Fo the idol	Roman Catholic Church.
Foksi-roku	Henry Fox, Lord Holland.
Foutao	Gibraltar.
Fra-nep	General Sir William Draper.
Free-booter	King of Prussia.
Fumma	Portugal.
Fune	Navy.
Gentile Province	Silesia.
Gio-gio	George III.
Gio-hama-baba	George II.
Gotto-mio	John, fourth Duke of Bedford.
Great Cham	Emperor of Germany.
Hag	Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough.
Hel-y-otte	Admiral John Elliott.

He-rhumm . . .	Admiral Sir John Moore.
Hob-nob	Admiral Hopson.
H——e	David Hume.
Hy-lib-bib	General Blighe.
Ian-on-i	Sir William Johnson, Bart.
Jan-di-dtzin . . .	John Wilkes.
Japan	England.
Jeddo	Germany.
Jonkh	Man-of-war.
Ka-frit-o	Cape Breton.
Kaliff	Lord Clive.
Kempfer	Engelbertus Kaempfer.
Kep-marl	George Keppel, third Earl of Albemarle.
Kha-fell	Admiral Viscount Keppel.
Kho-rhe	Goree.
Khutt-whang . . .	General Sir Eyre Coote.
Koan General . . .	General Edward Braddock.
Kobot	George I.
Kow-kin	Richard Digby.
Kunt-than	Count von Daun.
Kurd	Prussians.
Legion	The People.
Le-yaw-ter . . .	James, second Baron Tyrawley.
Lley-nah	Robert, first Earl of Northington.
Lli-mam	Manila.
Llur-cher	Charles Churchill.
Lob-Kob	Earl Temple.
Manchoux Empress . .	Elizabeth, Empress of Russia.
Mantchoux Tartars . .	Russians.
Meaco	London.
Mekaddo	William the Conqueror.
M——y	Ministry.
Mobile	The People.
Moria-tanti . . .	General Sir John Mordaunt.
Motao	Minorca.
Mura-clami . . .	William, first Earl of Mansfield.
Myn-than	Battle of Minden.
Nem-buds-ju . . .	Jews.
Nin-kom-poo-po . .	George, Baron Anson.
Niphon	Great Britain.

Nob-o-di	William, second Viscount Barrington.
Or-nbas	Admiral Henry Osborn.
Ostrog	Austria.
Pekin	Versailles.
Phall-Khan	Admiral Lord Hawke.
Phyl-Kholl	Admiral Lord Colville.
Pol-hassan-akousti	Augustus III, Elector of Saxony, King of Poland.
Praff-patt-phogg	Charles Pratt, Earl Camden.
Qua-chu	Guadeloupe.
Quamba-cun-dono	William Augustus, Duke of Cambridge.
Quan-bu-ka	Duke.
Queen Syko	Queen Anne.
Quib-quab	Quebec.
Quintius Curtius	Voltaire.
Quo	Nobleman.
Rha-rin-tumm	Admiral Barrington.
Rhum-Kikh	Alderman William Beckford.
Sab-oi	Savoy.
Sel-uon	Admiral Sir Charles Knowles.
Serednee Tartars	Swedes.
Sey-seo-gun	Admiral.
She-it-kums-hi-til	Whigs or Tories.
Shi-tilk-ums-heit	Tories or Whigs.
S——tt	Smollett.
Soo-san-sin-o	Grenville.
Sti-phi-rum-poo	Philip, first Earl of Hardwicke.
Syko, Queen	Queen Anne.
Tan-yah	Havana.
Tartar Princess	Queen Caroline.
Tartars of Yesso	Hanoverians.
Tartary	Germany.
Taycho	Lord Chatham.
Tensio-dai-sin	Alfred the Great.
Terra Australia	Africa.
Terra Australia Incognita	Australia.
Thin-quo	Martinique.
Thum-Khumm-qua	Thomas Cumming.
Tickets of bamboo	Bank-bills.

consider the weakness, profligacy, and abandoned debauchery of the French court, which they, whose situations entitle them to be the best judges, represent as a second *Sodom*, the poverty, misery, and discontent of the lower classes, and the violent desire of change, glowing and burning in the breasts of those who are the most able, and indeed the only people in whose power it is to bring that change about, we need not hesitate to assert that some great revolution must ensue, in the course of a few years, in the government, religion, and manners of the people of that country. Indeed, from the best general view which I am able to form, of the internal political state of the kingdom of France, I cannot bring myself to believe that the present despotic system can, at any rate, continue more than *twenty years longer*. If religion has invented and nourished those frauds, upon whom the despotism of France was founded; and the belief of that religion is now almost obliterated from amongst all ranks, what is in the future to support such a government, even when the general interest seems loudly to demand its demolition? That the change, come when it will, *must be thorough, violent, and bloody*, we may fairly prognosticate, both from the known character of those who are likely to have the chief hand in the reformation, and from that of the common people of France, whom their whole history proves to be the most sanguinary, unprincipled, and barbarous of any populace in Europe. Were it possible for me to live to witness it, I should by no means wonder to see the principles of Republicanism predominant *for a while* in France, for it is the property of extremes to meet; and our abstract rights naturally lead to that form of government, and it is not the season to moderate abstraction, during the fury and concussion of political earthquakes.

Whenever a revolution upon such grounds as these shall happen in France, the flame of war will be universally lighted up throughout Europe; either from the inhabitants of other countries instantaneously catching the contagion, or from the apprehensions of their respective governments. But whenever the great mass of mankind shall become enlightened, it will be as vain as perilous for governments to attempt to combat principles, which can only be effected with success during the reign of ignorance and superstition. I see it, in the clearest light, that the people of France, Germany, and Italy (but more especially the *latter*) are bound to become weary of the impositions of religion, and the galling fetters of slavery. And I behold a new order of people about to arise in Europe, which shall give laws to law-givers, discharges to priests, and lessons to kings.

As for our own country, . . .

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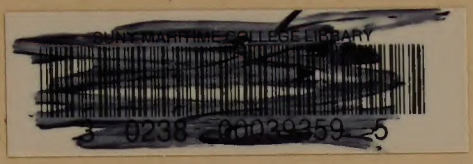

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